

Failing to attract males in the early years of teaching: A study of male undergraduate Bachelor of Education students at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (Edgewood Campus).

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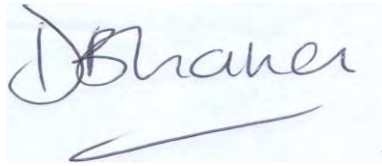
A research study submitted as the dissertation component in the fulfilment of the requirements for the Master of Education Degree in the School of Education, University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa.

Supervisor: Professor Deevia Bhana

December 2013

‘As the candidate’s supervisor I agree / do not agree to the submission of this dissertation’.

Signed

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Deevia Bhana', with a long horizontal flourish underneath.

Name

Professor Deevia Bhana

Date

13-09-2013

Declaration

I, ***Shaaista Moosa*** declare that:

- (i) The research reported in this dissertation, except where otherwise indicated, is my original work.
- (ii) This dissertation has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university.
- (iii) This dissertation does not contain other person's data, pictures, graphs or other information, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other persons.
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Abstract

This qualitative study addresses the problem of the reluctance of males in a South African higher education institution to pursue teaching in the early years. The main question to arise from this problem is this; why are males in a local South African higher education context reluctant to pursue teaching in the early years? The central claim in addressing this question is that the constructions of masculinity play a huge role in influencing the concentration of men opting to teach young children to be low. My aims and purpose of this study is to therefore understand why males in a local South African higher education context are reluctant to pursue teaching in the early years and the implication for gender equality.

The research context of this study lies in the domain of literature on studies of men, masculinities and teaching in the early years, particularly from the West, as there has been a dearth of research on this matter in the South African context. I begin from the premise that the constructions of masculinity play a role in influencing the low concentration of men opting to teach young children. The method I used to achieve these aims was that of conducting individual qualitative interviews with 15 male undergraduate BEd students at Edgewood Campus who were not specialising in the Foundation Phase (early years of teaching).

My results show that that the constructions of masculinity indeed play a role in influencing these men not to opt to teach young children and from these I am able to conclude that male pre-service teachers' account of teaching and teachers of young children is an account of gender and doing masculinity. It was found that several issues served to deter the male students in this study from entering into the early years of teaching and these issues dealt largely with the dominant constructions of masculinity and femininity. These issues included instances where the male

students constructed the early years of teaching as a profession ideally suited towards females because females according to the students were caring, nurturing and had more patience to work with young children in the early years of schooling. The higher years of teaching on the other hand was considered to be a more suitable profession for males as a result of it being characterized by a greater intellectual capacity and thus a higher status profession. The significance of this study lies in designing suitable interventions which will encourage more men to enter teaching in the early years.

In short, this dissertation addresses the problem of understanding why males are so reluctant to enter teaching in the early years of schooling. It has done so by highlighting the reasons why males in a local South African higher education context are reluctant to pursue teaching in the early years. This becomes necessary in order to develop suitable intervention strategies in order to achieve a more balanced ratio of male and female teachers in the early years of teaching. Furthermore achieving a balanced ratio of male and female teachers in this area of teaching can be seen as a significant step towards the realization of gender equality in the workplace.

Abbreviations and acronyms

BEd Bachelor of Education

ECD Early Childhood Education

FET Further Education and Training

Table of Contents

Declaration.....	iii
Acknowledgements.....	iv
Abstract.....	v
Abbreviations and acronyms.....	vii
Table of Contents.....	viii
Chapter One Introduction to the study	1
1.1 Introduction.....	1
1.2 Background and focus of study.....	1
Table 1. Number and Percentage of male BEd students enrolled in each academic year at Edgewood Campus	2
1.3 Aims and objectives.....	4
1.4 Masculinity as an active construction	5
1.5 Key research questions	6
1.7 Brief outline of chapters.....	7
Chapter Two Literature Review	9
2.1 Introduction.....	9
2.2 A lack of male teachers in the early years of teaching	11
2.3 The feminization of primary school teaching	13
2.4 Negative perceptions of men who teach young children	17
2.5 Teaching of young children – a case for mothering	26
2.6 Teaching young children as a low status profession.....	27
2.7 Males who have pursued the early years of teaching	30
2.8 Changing mindsets to encourage more male teachers to enter the early years of teaching	34
2.9 Theoretical Framework.....	35
2.10 Masculinity as an active construction	36
2.11 Multiple masculinities in South Africa	36
2.12 Hierarchies of masculinities.....	37
2.13 Masculinities and schooling.....	38
2.14 Conclusion	38
Chapter Three Methodology.....	40
3.1 Introduction.....	40
3.2 A qualitative research approach.....	40
3.3 The interpretivist research paradigm	42

3.4 The research context	42
Table 2: Demographics of students at Edgewood campus, 2011	43
3.5 Sampling	43
Table 3: Listing of respondents.....	46
3.6 Data collection process: individual interviews	46
3.7 Limitations	51
3.8 Validity and reliability	52
3.9 Ethical Considerations	54
3.10 Data Analysis	55
Table 4: Lichtmans six steps of data analysis (Lichtman, 2010, pp. 198-199).....	57
3.11 Conclusion	57
Chapter Four Data Analysis	59
4.1 Introduction.....	59
4.2 Teaching Foundation Phase – “a women’s job”	59
4.3 “We as men don’t have patience”	69
4.4 Foundation Phase as a feminized area of teaching: “I didn’t see any males there so as a male I didn’t even think about going there”	73
4.5 A negative portrayal of males who pursue Foundation Phase teaching: “to be on ECD or Foundation Phase is just not ayoba (expression of delight, excitement, agreement and approval)”	76
4.6 Disassociation from the Foundation Phase is a confirmation of and instantiation of masculine power: “As a guy you should step up and teach a higher grade”	80
4.7 A need for more males in the early years of teaching.....	89
4.8 Men who teach in the Foundation Phase: “Aiyhh I think maybe they can be seen as gay sometimes”	95
4.9 Males securing managerial positions in primary schools: “if they want to teach young children they must do it because they want to not for promotional purposes”	98
4.10 Culture and teaching in the early years: “In the African culture the men is not responsible for the young children”	101
4.11 Conclusion	104
Chapter Five Conclusion.....	106
5.1 Introduction.....	106
5.2 Main findings	108
5.3 Possible recommendations.....	114
5.4 Conclusion	117
References.....	119

Appendix 2: Informed consent – participants (male students)	133
Appendix 3: Semi-structured interview schedule (individual interview)	135
Appendix 4: Turnitin originality report	137

Chapter One Introduction to the study

1.1 Introduction

This study entitled: **“Failing to attract males in the early years of teaching: A study of male undergraduate Bachelor of Education students at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (Edgewood Campus)”** investigates why males in a local South African higher education context are reluctant to pursue teaching in the early years. It draws from a qualitative study of 15 male undergraduate BEd students at Edgewood Campus who were not specialising in the early years of teaching.

1.2 Background and focus of study

Statistics from the School of Education at the Edgewood Campus at the University of KwaZulu-Natal have shown that only a very small number of male entrants at the institution are specialising in the teaching of young children (DMI, 2013). The two phase specialisations which permit students to enter teaching in the early years are the Early Childhood Phase (ECD) and the Foundation/Intermediate Phase. The ECD phase specialisation focuses on the educational needs of children ranging from birth to age 9 (grade 3), and here students are trained for working with young children in pre-schools and day-care and for teaching in the Foundation Phase (UKZN, 2012). The Foundation/Intermediate Phase focuses on the education of primary school children from grade 1 to grade 6 and here students are trained as generalists, with the knowledge and skills required to teach the full range of learning programmes that make up the primary school curriculum (UKZN, 2012). The early years of teaching in this study thus refers to the teaching of young children in the early years of schooling. The table on the next page highlights the total number of BEd male entrants at the Edgewood Campus as well as the percentage and number of males students enrolled in the different phases of specialisation at the institution over a period of 5 years.

PHASE OF SPECIALISATION	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
ECD (Grade R-3)	17 2%	62 8%	61 7%	65 7%	49 4%
Foundation/Intermediate (Grade 1-6)	9 1%	6 0.7%	7 0.8%	11 1%	9 0.7%
Intermediate/Senior (Grade 4-9)	68 9%	69 9%	74 9%	71 7%	79 7%
Senior/FET (Grade 9-12)	218 30%	243 31%	238 28%	238 25%	293 26%
FET (Grade 10-12)	418 57%	411 52%	469 55%	584 60%	718 63%
The Total Number of male BEd students	730	791	849	969	1148

Table 1. Number and Percentage of male BEd students enrolled in each academic year at Edgewood Campus (DMI, 2013)

Evidently only a small percentage of the total number of male students at Edgewood Campus, are enrolled in the two phases that would permit them to teach young Foundation Phase children. This will consequently lead to a lack of male teachers in the early years, which according to Koutros (2010) has become an epidemic throughout the world. This study has investigated why there are so few male undergraduate students in the ECD and Foundation/Intermediate Phases at Edgewood Campus. Beyond the numbers evident from DMI (2013) above are the processes that take shape in the choices that male students make in opting out of teaching young children. Why this is the case forms the basis of this study.

In South Africa a gender analysis of teachers has shown that although teaching is a female dominated profession, males are seen to dominate in senior leadership positions found in this profession (Morrell, Epstein, Unterhalter, Bhana & Moletsane, 2009). This practice promotes gender inequality as it often results in uneven power relationships between men and women, in which males exert power over women, leading to their subordination to men in all sectors of society (Coetzee, 2001). Whilst there has been an emphasis on there being more male than female

managers in South African schools (Morrell et al., 2009), studies highlighting the feminization of teaching more specifically in the early years of teaching and a lack of males in this particular area of teaching in the South African context have been very few. The feminization of teaching particularly in the early years results in it being characterized as a female territory, not only by society at large, but also by prospective employees and practicing teachers (Carrington & McPhee, 2008). As mentioned above, statistics at a local South African Higher Education institution (Edgewood Campus) have shown that only a very small percentage of the total number male pre-service teachers have opted to specialise in the early years of teaching (DMI, 2013), contributing to the lack of male teachers in the early years identified by Koutros (2010).

Skelton (2009, p.50) argues that “primary teaching is clearly and evidently a ‘female’ profession and to shift this identification requires a breaking down of stereotypical expectations of existing staff, parents, pupils, government and media”. Many theorists also think that the domination of primary education by females is largely due to the fact that females have been socialized into teaching young children, due to the existence of a strong association between teaching and homemaking responsibilities that has originated from influences adopted from society (Thornton & Bricheno, 2006). Carrington and McPhee (2008) also indicate that a career where one is expected to deal with young children is frequently linked with nurturing and possessing a caring persona. Skelton (2009) argues that one reason for the dismissal of primary teaching as an appropriate career for males is the interrelationship involving (hegemonic) gender and (hetero) sexuality. The effect of this is that men who want to pursue a career teaching young children are in danger of being regarded as deviant, abnormal or lacking (Mills, Martino & Lingard, 2004). Mills et al. (2004) indicate that the construction of teaching as an inherent female activity has regulated the entry of males into specific areas in this line of work, especially the occupation of teaching in the early years and has constructed males who pursue teaching in the early years as ‘abnormal’ which is likely to be interpreted as being homosexual or (possibly) a paedophile. Johnston, McKeown and McEwen (1999) also found that broader stereotypes of masculinity exist with regards to teachers who teach in a primary school. They discovered that there is a perception that teaching children who are young is an extension of mothering, and that meaningful learning would only begin when learners reached the secondary phase in school (Johnston et al. 1999). Johnston et al. (1999) argue that it is therefore likely that primary school

teaching is considered to be ‘low level’ work that is not intellectually demanding and since intellectual power is powerfully linked with masculinity, males might consequently avoid this ‘low level’ work in favour of a more ‘meaningful’ profession.

It is evident that such perceptions and stereotypes regarding the teaching of young children play a pivotal role in contributing to the reluctance of males to enter this largely feminized domain. This reluctance results in a gender imbalance of male and female teachers in primary schools which according to INTO (2004) raises the issue of equity in the labour market. Furthermore there is concern about what learners may be learning through the hidden curriculum if the teaching profession is highly sex-differentiated (INTO, 2004). Marsiglio (2009) indicates that if there were a gendered balance of male and female teachers then this would convey a strong message to children that learning in a school environment cannot be limited to being a masculine or feminine experience but is rather a human experience. He argues that male teachers can show both boys and girls that men can provide a supportive learning atmosphere and that young people must be encouraged to consider careers as open to all people irrespective of stereotypes attached to ones gender (Marsiglio, 2009). Thornton and Bricheno (2006) further argue that teaching is professional and intellectual work suited to both males and females who undertake the required training and who have the right personal skills and attitudes. Carrington, Tymms and Merrell (2008) have also indicated that policy-makers need to recognize that male and female teachers must confront stereotypical beliefs and offer other viewpoints, in an effort to release children from the restrictions of the leading constructions of males and females. It is therefore imperative that much more is done in South Africa to ensure that a concerted effort is made to attract more males into teaching in the early years.

1.3 Aims and objectives

As a teacher who specialised in the Foundation/Intermediate Phase at Edgewood Campus, I had been surprised to note that male students who were in the same academic year were strikingly absent from those specialising in this phase. This personal observation of a lack of male students in this phase was a concern that interested me and prompted me to question why these male students are reluctant to pursue a degree in the Foundation/Intermediate Phase that would allow them to teach in a primary school. Weaver-Hightower (2011) has argued that in spite of public

desires & policy movements to increase their numbers, significant barriers and challenges still exist for male teachers. “Pre-service teachers’ experiences, especially, might illuminate challenges to the recruitment and retention of males” (Weaver-Hightower, 2011, p.97). In South Africa there has been limited research into why male students are reluctant to pursue teaching in the early years. In view of the minimal numbers of BEd male students opting to specialise in the early years of teaching at the Edgewood campus, part of a South African higher education institution, this study therefore chose to investigate why these male students at Edgewood campus are reluctant to pursue teaching in the early years. Whilst working towards achieving this aim this study also discloses the extent to which the constructions of masculinity have impacted on the lower concentration of men opting to teach young children. In addition it is hoped that the results of this study will serve to illuminate this issue in South Africa, and also that the necessary steps will be taken at the University of KwaZulu-Natal to ensure that more males go into the early years of teaching. This is vital as it not only has effects for the feminization of teaching but also for what is happening in the classroom.

1.4 Masculinity as an active construction

Connell (1996, p.210) indicates that “Masculinities do not exist prior to social behaviour, either as bodily states or as fixed personalities”. Morrell (2005) identifies masculinity as something which has been changing, is fluid and can be the entity of social, political and individual work. According to Connell (1996) masculinities exist as individuals perform and they are achieved in everyday behaviour or organizational life, as constructions of social practice. Mills (2004) argues that in trying to understand why fewer men than women enter into the teaching profession, what is possibly needed is a more sexualized analysis of what keeps men out of the classroom. “This will involve a discussion of the role of masculinities, and their policing and construction within the teaching profession” (Mills, 2004, p.30). According to Mills (2004) males who do not abide to hegemonised kinds of masculinities, frequently as a result of carrying out behaviours considered to be ‘feminine’, are therefore constructed as ‘abnormal’ or gay and end up becoming marginalized inside the social organization of masculinities. Consequently masculinity as an active construction is used in this study to understand and interpret how the experiences encountered in each of the male participants’ lives have contributed to the specific form of

masculinity that they exhibit which ultimately influences their decision to avoid pursuing teaching in the early years.

1.5 Key research questions

In order to attain the objectives of this study the following research questions were asked:

Key Research Question:

Why are there so few male undergraduate students in the ECD and Foundation Phases on Edgewood Campus?

Sub Questions:

1. What reasons do male undergraduate students offer for the failure to select the ECD and Foundation Phases of teaching?
2. How does the construction of masculinity influence a male undergraduate student's decision to avoid specializing in the early years of teaching?
3. What are the perceived effects of such masculine constructs on the teaching of ECD and Foundation Phase teaching?
4. What are male undergraduate students' feelings and opinions regarding fellow male students who are specializing in the ECD/Foundation Phase?

1.6 University of KwaZulu-Natal (Edgewood Campus): the research site

This study was conducted at the University of KwaZulu-Natal's Edgewood campus which is the university's primary site for teacher education training (UKZN, 2009). Edgewood campus, formerly known as Edgewood College before its incorporation in 2001, offers initial and in-service teacher education training as well as university higher degrees in an extensive choice of specialisations in education, this includes the implementation of research and consultancy (UKZN, 2009). The campus is located in Pinetown, approximately 20 minutes away from Durban (UKZN, 2009). The School is also actively connected with policy-making in education in South Africa and adds to the university's international profile by participating in a wide range of academically related international activities (UKZN, 2009). All of the male undergraduate BEd students who participated in this study were students from Edgewood Campus.



Illustration 1: The University of KwaZulu-Natal's Edgewood Campus
(<http://www.ukzn.ac.za/about-ukzn/campuses>)

1.7 Brief outline of chapters

Chapter one firstly provides an introduction to the study by highlighting its background and focus. Broad issues around why males are reluctant to pursue teaching in the early years are outlined in order to provide the reader with background knowledge on this phenomenon. Thereafter the main aims and objectives of the study are discussed and a short description of the research site where the study was conducted is provided. A short description of masculinity as an active construction is also presented in this Chapter in order to provide the reader with an idea of how masculinities influence the reluctance of males to enter the early years of teaching. Lastly this Chapter briefly outlines what is to follow in the subsequent chapters.

Chapter two of this study is a review of literature on all the important research that has been previously done on the reasons why males are reluctant to pursue teaching in the early years. The theoretical framework used to analyse the data for this study is also described in this chapter. Connell's (1995) construction of masculinities was the theoretical framework adopted for the analysis of the data collected in this study.

Chapter three explains and highlights the research methods and data collection instruments that were used to collect and analyse the data in this study. A qualitative research approach was used to generate relevant and reliable data for this study. A constructionist research paradigm was used in order to disclose the extent to which the male students' own constructions of masculinity

had impacted on their decision to avoid the early years of teaching. Purposive sampling was used to select participants for this study and an explanation of this sampling strategy is provided in this chapter. The data collection process entailed individual interviews with 15 male students. The limitations, reliability of the study and validity are discussed in chapter three. The ethical considerations that were employed during the research process are also discussed. Finally, a description and discussion of how thematic analysis would be used to analyse the collected data are provided in this chapter.

The findings of this study are analysed in Chapter four using thematic content analysis. The findings are interpreted and discussed in order to provide the reader with an understanding of what the results mean. The findings are also compared with other studies done within this particular field of research in order to ascertain similarities and differences.

Chapter five of this study offers a comprehensive summary of each chapter in this dissertation. It also highlights the main findings of the study. Lastly possible recommendations that can be employed to counteract the problem surrounding the reluctance of males to enter the early years of teaching are provided in this concluding chapter.

Chapter Two Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The first section of this chapter is a review of related literature on the research topic. The second section centres on the theoretical framework which has been adopted in this study and how it will be used to interpret and analyse the collected data.

In South Africa “a gender analysis of teachers by seniority has shown that although women make up 74% of basic grade teachers and 66% of heads of department, they comprise only 41% of deputy principals and principals” (Morrell et al., 2009, p.169). Evidently in South Africa although teaching is a feminized profession, males are seen to dominate largely in senior leadership positions in the teaching profession. This practice promotes gender inequality as it often results in uneven power relationships between men and women, in which males exert power over women, leading to their subordination to men in all sectors of society (Coetzee, 2001). Whilst there has been an emphasis on there being more male than female managers in South African schools (Morrell et al., 2009), studies highlighting the feminization of teaching in the early years of schooling and a lack of males in this particular area of teaching in the South African context have been minimal. The feminization of teaching particularly in the early years results in it being characterized as a female territory, not only by society at large, but also by prospective employees and practicing teachers (Carrington & Mcphee, 2008). Statistics at a local South African higher education institution reveal that only a very small percentage of the total number male pre-service teachers have opted to specialise in the early years of teaching (DMI, 2013)(DMI, 2013). This will consequently contribute to a lack of male teachers in the early years, which according to Koutros (2010) has become an epidemic throughout the world. Moors (2010) has argued that in a democratic society there needs to be an equitable balance with the percentage of male teachers reflecting the percentage of male learners. Furthermore supporting and encouraging the participation of males working with young children serves to dispute the traditional and extensively held notion that working with young children is ‘naturally gendered’ (Cameron, 2001). Cameron (2001, p.437) indicates that “implicit within such a challenge is the promotion of equality in roles between men and women both within the domestic household and in the workforce”. The lack of males in the early years of teaching therefore can also be seen as a practice which promotes gender inequality.

Morrell and Jewkes (2011) maintain that despite South Africa's history of colonialism and apartheid, and the high rates of homicide and rape, within the context of studies on fatherhood and on how men deal with their vulnerability, there now exists an increasing amount of literature which records and examines men's caring. Their analysis indicates that this literature provides evidence that caring is a tool for constructing a way towards the realization of gender equality, seeing that it transfers 'female' work onto males, and releases in them the yearning to love and care for their children, their family and even for themselves (Morrell & Jewkes, 2011). King (1998) has associated teaching with caring and indicates that teaching and caring in the lower grades of teaching are almost tantamount in our culture. He argues that the teachers of young children are automatically understood to care about and provide care for their learners (King, 1998). The engagement in caring practices, according to Morrell and Jewkes (2011), has previously been understood as the territory of women. The teaching of young children, because of its association with childcare, is therefore often regarded as a caring profession and thus 'women's' work. Furthermore, in constructions of masculinity if the definition of caring goes further than provision and protection and goes on to include hands-on attending to the sick, aged, young and engaging emotionally with those being provided with care, then its position in the collection of principles that construct masculine identity changes (Morrell & Jewkes, 2011). Morrell and Jewkes (2011) have also revealed that in South Africa men who assume care work out of duty are perhaps a minority whereas the majority of men have chosen to avoid care work completely and take their family responsibilities lightly. Although there have been studies conducted around teachers and/or masculinities in South Africa (Bhana, de Lange & Mitchell, 2009; Morrell & Jewkes, 2011; Morrell, 1998) studies conducted more specifically on the lack of males in the early years of teaching have been scarce. This review of related literature therefore presents a discussion on studies of men, masculinities and teaching in the early years particularly from the West, as there is a dearth of research on this matter in the South African context. It is also important to note that whilst many of these western studies focus on the experiences of male pre-service teachers who were currently pursuing teaching in the early years (Mulholland & Hansen, 2005; Weaver-Hightower, 2011; Johnston et al., 1999; Montecinos & Nielsen, 2004; Smedley, 1998; Warwick, Warwick & Hopper, 2012), there had been limited research focusing

on male pre-service teachers who did not opt to go into the early years of teaching and their reasons for doing so.

A literature review, according to Henning (2004), is simply used to contextualize one's study to argue a case, and to ascertain a position to be engaged by one's own research. The themes that I have focused on in the literature review are as follows:

- A lack of male teachers in the early years of teaching
- The feminization of primary school teaching
- Negative perceptions of men who teach young children
- Teaching of young children – a case for mothering
- Teaching young children as a low status profession
- Males who have pursued the early years of teaching
- Changing mindsets to encourage more male teachers to enter the early years of teaching

2.2 A lack of male teachers in the early years of teaching

According to Cushman (2005), as the percentage of males teaching in primary schools continues to drop, the subsequent gender imbalance has come into the spotlight resulting in widespread discussions and debates. There is an increasing belief among some scholars that an appropriate balance of male and female adults' roles in their different methods to children's learning is not being upheld in the educational experience of very young learners (Johnston et. al, 1999). Carrington and McPhee (2008) argue that in countries like England and Scotland, policymakers have often portrayed the intended recruitment of males to the teaching profession as a means to address male underachievement and estrangement from school. There exists a generally held notion that boys' educational encounters are being constrained by a lack of male role models (Carrington & McPhee, 2008). Roulston and Mills (2000) reveal that the causal factors of underachievement often identified with the underachieving boy typically include having single-parent families with a female as the head of the household and the feminization of teaching. Therefore the argument that has been presented for encouraging male workers in early childhood care or education services is that males can be role models for the children, especially boys

(Cameron, 2001). Cushman (2005) however argues that the premise that the male teacher can make up for the lack of a male at home needs greater inspection since it implies that on the one hand, the child without a male care giver in the home is essentially disadvantaged and, on the other hand children belonging to homes with abusive or negligent fathers are at an advantage over those without fathers. It has also been said that children usually relate better to teachers that are the same gender as themselves (and vice versa) (Carrington & McPhee, 2008). However on the contrary, in their study of children's educational experiences Carrington et al. (2008) found that there had been no empirical evidence to substantiate such claims that there is a tendency for male teachers to increase the educational performance of boys and equally for female teachers to increase the educational performance of girls.

King (2004) argues that individuals who are teaching or those who are planning to teach very young learners have to endure a thorough examination with regards to their suitability of fulfilling a teacher's role and that overall the professional monitoring of teaching values and attributes are usually sensible expectations. In spite of this there still remains a collection of interrelated cultural traditions entrenched in this monitoring, which intentionally and unfairly affects men who intend to teach young children (King, 2004). Carrington and McPhee (2008) indicate that over the years there have been numerous explanations presented for the limited number of males in teaching, especially within the primary or elementary area of teaching. King (2004) identifies three underlying issues of unfairness which have been implicated in the negative views of male teachers, first the societal expectations of male and female teachers in terms of which teaching is understood as caring, secondly the assumed sexual orientations for suitable and unsuitable teachers and lastly the allegations of paedophilia. Cushman (2005) further indicates that even though the reasons resulting in the drop of the percentage of males registering in teacher education are complicated and many-sided, there have been four factors which play a part in intensifying the decline. These include the experiences and outlooks with regards to status, salary, being employed in a feminized area of work and physical contact with young learners (Cushman, 2005). Mills (2004) argues that in trying to comprehend the reasons why so few males as compared to women pursue a career in teaching, what is possibly required is a further sexualized analysis of the factors which keep men away from this particular line of work. "This will involve a discussion of the role of masculinities, and their policing and

construction within the teaching profession” (Mills, 2004, p.30). According to Mills (2004) men who do not abide by hegemonised kinds of masculinities, usually through carrying out behaviours considered as ‘feminine’, are therefore frequently labelled as ‘abnormal’ or gay and end up being marginalized within the social organization of masculinities. Simpson (2005) indicates that discomfort arising from gender role behaviour is likely to surface if there are tensions concerning a person’s gender and work-related stereotyping. Males who work in non-traditional professions may consequently experience conflict resulting from the dissonance between the call to uphold masculine identities and the feminine associations or requirements of the profession (Simpson, 2005). Carrington et al. (2008) argue that whilst the employment of men in the upper primary school level is more likely to be willingly accepted within dominant ideas of masculinity, the teaching of children who are younger has a tendency to be linked to performances of nurturing and is commonly understood as being a ‘woman’s job’. The multiple or diverse ways in which these ‘dominant notions of masculinity’ contribute to the reluctance of males entering the early years of teaching will now be discussed and I will also speak briefly about some of the experiences of male teachers who are in the early years of teaching. It is important to highlight these experiences since such experiences may contribute to the reluctance of males entering the early years of teaching.

2.3 The feminization of primary school teaching

According to Griffiths (2006) there are diverse as well as contending definitions of feminization as referring to either the (absolute or proportional) amount of women in teaching or to a way of life linked with women. Sumison (2000) indicates that regardless of a recent escalation in the number of males participating in various traditionally female occupations, teaching in the early years persists to be extensively understood as being women’s work. Smedley (2007) further indicates that not many men opt to become primary school teachers, and the men who do step into an environment regarded as feminized and they have to deal with an outlook from the public where they are idealized and demonized at the same time. Johnston et al. (1999) further states that males are aware of this feminization. This awareness in turn contributes to the reluctance of males to enter primary school teaching (Johnston et al., 1999). A male primary teacher respondent in Carrington’s (2002) study also revealed that most of the males he knew had

pursued secondary teaching because if you were male and wanted to be a teacher then secondary teaching was more acceptable.

He attributed this to something in society which has developed and can be traced to the earlier Victorian ages during which primary school teachers were unmarried females who assumed a caring position; once children became older and moved into secondary school, it was then believed it to be more of a male line of work (Carrington, 2002). The perception that primary teaching is a suitable and appropriate job for women can be traced back to when elementary state education was introduced in the UK and the teaching of young learners was regarded as females' work (Skelton, 2002). One of the respondents in the research carried out by Johnston et al., (1999) went on to identify how there is a risk of women becoming stereotyped into the role of a primary school teacher and how this in turn influences those pursuing this line of work. He indicated that this is not instilled in a man's mind but rather it is something that he has grown up with over the years (Johnston et al., 1999).

Skelton (2009) maintains that primary teaching is visibly and obviously a 'female' occupation and to alter this classification calls for a deconstruction of stereotypical expectations of current teachers, parents, learners and society at large. Thornton and Bricheno (2006) reveal that many academics have considered that primary education may be dominated by females because they have undergone socialisation that equips them to teach learners in this age group and due to the existence of a strong link with homemaking responsibilities, originating from societal influences. Johnston et al. (1999) found that among student teachers there existed an internalisation of the connection between femaleness and primary teaching and therefore female teachers were thought to make better teachers in a primary school. Carrington and McPhee (2008) also indicate that working with young learners is frequently linked with nurturing and possessing a caring persona. As a result primary teaching is often regarded as a typically female territory not only by society in general, but also particularly by prospective teacher recruits and practising teachers (Carrington & McPhee, 2008).

According Bhroime'il (2006), a rule implemented in national schools in Ireland in the year 1905 stipulated that male learners who were less than eight years old were not allowed to enrol in a boy's school that did not have an assistant mistress, unless there was no suitable school with a

mistress available within the area. The objective of this rule was to improve the education of infants, to facilitate more effective education and lastly to allow for infant boys to be in the care of mistresses who, according to inspectors, were regarded as the most appropriate instructors (Bhroime'il, 2006). The inspectors indicated that women had a greater tendency to possess the required sympathy and patience for dealing with very young children as both boys and girls would be better cared for by a female mistress than a male master who was deemed to be unfit by both training and temperament to teach infants (Bhroime'il, 2006).

Sumison (2000) asserts that the excitement about expanding possibilities among her male teacher respondents was constrained by anxieties stemming from what these males believed to be gender-related limitations within the context of early childhood. The respondents in her study made reference to the 'feminized' professional way of life and the persistent need to deal with community (and to a slighter degree) collegial mistrust (Sumison, 2000).

According to King (2004) teaching in the early years has been regarded as 'women's work' and the specialised workforce for this work has been influenced by patriarchal constructions of 'women who work' (with children). He indicates that the set of laws that described who should be permitted to teach identified a position that only chaste women could hold onto (King, 2004). King (2004) further indicates that, as a remnant from the societal background of Victorian sexual restraint, female teachers were expected to portray themselves as having no sexuality and this explanation seems to be old-fashioned and possibly oppressive. King (2004) also reveals that the outcome of such historical limitations of teachers continues to linger in our present notion of a teacher's role and in our assumption that teaching includes obligatory caring within a desexualized occupation. He argues that these old-fashioned expectations of earlier teachers are used to police current teachers and additionally a comparable regulation is internalised by teachers who might attempt to be consistent with the expectations of others (King, 2004). King (2004) reveals that there is a widespread view that characterizes males who teach in preschools and in the primary grades as homosexuals. Skelton (2009) has further indicated that the strong correlation between masculinity and sexuality leads easily to an implication that a sexual agenda must be a motivating factor for those aspiring to teach young learners.

Mills et al. (2004) have indicated that in teaching like so many other traditionally 'female' professions, the salaries are lower and the higher levels of the profession are occupied by males. King (2000) argues that in order to maintain this exploitative set of gender relations, it is necessary to keep men out of the ranks. Mills et al. (2004) argue that to a certain extent this is made possible by labelling men who want to teach as aspiring to be like women and therefore as abnormal men. "This is less so in relation to high school teaching within the masculinised domains, such as science, mathematics, manual arts and physical education, but particularly so in relation to teaching in the early years of school" (Mills et al., 2004, p.358).

Sumison (2000) reveals that the male teacher respondents in her study believed that the professional way of life in the early years of teaching to be strongly gendered. Relations amongst staff and children for example, appeared to be characterized by physical passivity, which the respondents in her study had interpreted as a feminine preference (Sumison, 2000). One of the male teacher respondents in her study revealed that whilst working with children between the ages from birth to three years, there was a great deal of sitting down, offering cuddles and hugs, whilst he on the other hand desired to have more 'rough and tumble' (implying more 'masculine') physical involvement with children (Sumison, 2000).

In Sumison's study (2000) the male respondents expressed their irritation with regards to what they believed was a favouring of a 'feminine' discourse within the professional way of life in the early years of schooling. The respondents indicated that they found this discourse politically disempowering because it obstructed the early childhood sector's ability to influence policy outlines (Sumison, 2000). One of the male respondents elaborated on this by voicing his frustration over being referred to as a 'caregiver', a term which he felt was associated with babysitting and because of the notion of care it also had a female stereotype assigned to it. He further explained that if they are to assume greater power in society and become politically stronger, they should be referred to as teachers or educators and refrain from labelling themselves as 'caregivers' (Sumison, 2000). Sumison (2000) argues that the male respondents in her study appeared to be oblivious to the fact that by taking such a standpoint they could be responsible for bringing about patriarchal tendencies to devalue caring relationships.

According to Skelton (2009) one reason for the dismissal of teaching in the early years as an appropriate career for males is the relationship which exists between (hegemonic) gender and (hetero) sexuality. Skelton (2012) argues that if an aspiration to work with children who are young is a feminine feature, and femininity is 'other' to (dominant) masculinity, then men who want to engage in (feminine) primary teaching, by default, bring their (hetero) sexuality into question. The effect of this is that men who want to teach young learners are in danger of being regarded as deviant, abnormal or lacking (Mills et al., 2004). Skelton (2012) indicates that 'other' forms of sexuality most frequently cited as a concern by of for male primary teachers is homosexuality/homophobia and child sexual abuse. Having discussed how the feminization of primary school teaching impacts on the reluctance of males to enter teaching in the early years, I will now go on to review how negative perceptions of men who teach young children has an adverse effect for males who choose to go into the early years of teaching.

2.4 Negative perceptions of men who teach young children

According to Jones (2007) in numerous areas of society, males who contravene culturally consistent laws of judgment involving effeminate communication, style or etiquette are stigmatized. Cameron (2001) indicates that if male workers are regarded as abnormal inhabitants of the position of a childcare worker then their underlying reasons for pursuing childcare work are questioned. According to Allan (1993) actions that are considered to be natural displays of sensitivity to children's emotional needs in women are off-limits to men, who consider them as equally natural but at the same time as encouraging suspicions of abuse. Williams (1995a) found that males who enter occupations perceived as women's work give rise to varying public reactions and these include shock, scepticism and distrust as opposed to the reaction to female workers who are taken for granted as 'natural' occupiers of such positions. She demonstrates that the suspicion included the perception that males who embark on careers labelled as women's work must be effeminate, homosexual and possess a perverse sexual attraction towards children and that males are potentially dangerous and abusive (Williams, 1995a). Johnston et al. (1999) argues that males possess an awareness that they might need to deal with societal negativity concerning their choice to work with children whereas on the contrary, females have no such concerns. He attributes this to the media hype surrounding the abuse of children by a few men in

institutional settings which consequently results in disapproving attitudes towards men who work closely with young children (Johnston et al., 1999).

Cushman (2005) has also indicated that the widespread media publicity given to a few incidents where teachers have abused children has produced a greater awareness not only among male teachers but also among parents and children. In a study carried out by Coutler and McNay (1993) one of the respondents argued that whilst it was normal for female teachers to hug the boys and girls, he as a male teacher had been told to be careful of engaging in such a practice. A respondent in Cushman's (2005) study had indicated that he had a friend who even went to the extent of installing a camera in his room just so that he could protect himself from any false allegations. Cushman (2005) argues that teachers are well aware of how even a false allegation could possibly result in the end of their career and also that streetwise young children could strengthen this feeling of vulnerability.

All the male teacher respondents in a study carried out by Cushman (2005) revealed being within a close proximity to children was a concern that relentlessly filtered through their thoughts and actions. Four of the male teacher respondents in her study revealed that even following their years of teaching, having gained the trust and respect of learners, fellow teachers and parents, they still considered the act of placing a comforting hand on a child's shoulder as too risky (Cushman, 2005). One of the male teacher respondents in Cushman's (2005) study revealed that whilst the sight of the female teachers holding a child's hands in the playground was considered normal, if he had to do the same as a male teacher there would be an uproar and someone would complain about it. Another male teacher respondent in her study indicated that that he found it difficult to explain to the children when they asked why he would not touch them so he made up a story and told them that he was built of glass and would break if they touched him because he found that that this was the only way they would be able to understand (Cushman, 2005).

A respondent in the study carried out by Jones (2007) also revealed that there did exist concerns about paedophilia as it was seen as strange for men to be interested in children and their education. The respondent indicated that if you did not work in a school and had to witness a male hugging a child then you would automatically believe the worst and there are many

misconceptions and preconceptions about this which might be the reason why males stay away from teaching young children (Jones, 2007).

During his pre-service programme, a respondent in Sumison's (1999) study had welcomed the chance to create friendships with his male peers. However following his graduation he became very apprehensive about being allied with his male colleagues, due to the likelihood of unintentionally socializing with paedophiles (Sumison, 1999). The respondent indicated the following: "I know that I am all right but I can't know for sure about them" (Sumison, 1999, p.460). Sumison (1999) argues that his fear influenced him against seeking solidarity with other men to work collectively for change, and prohibited him from finding a medium in which he could address his anxieties and feelings of isolation.

Cushman (2005) indicates that the consequence of men's aversion to physical contact with children is that children are receiving very influential messages concerning touch to such a degree that close physical contact may become understood as abuse. She further indicates that men are being portrayed as being untrustworthy and children are receiving powerful messages concerning the increasingly diverse behaviours and interactions that individuals can anticipate from men and women (Cushman, 2005). Cushman (2005) argues that in the case of male teachers, the deliberation over whether or not they can afford to touch a child causes unnecessary pressure and strain which is seldom endured by most female primary school teachers. She indicates that this plays a huge factor in contributing to the failure of strategies aimed at recruiting and retaining male teachers (Cushman, 2005). A male teacher respondent in the study carried out by Sumison (1999) proclaimed that the sacrifice of being a male teacher of children in early childhood was huge as there had been a great deal of prejudice on a daily basis and this had been fundamental to the respondent's decision to leave teaching in the early childhood a few months later. The respondent indicated that he had people phone him anonymously and call him a paedophile and it felt like a ticking time bomb, with his waiting to be accused (Sumison, 1999).

Sumison (2000) found that what had been much more damaging to the self-esteem of the male respondents in her study was the persistent need to counteract the public's suspicion of men's intentions of working with young children. One of the respondents in her study indicated that he

felt he was in a position where he had to keep on defending himself and this action was instrumental in lowering his self-esteem (Sumison, 2000). Several of her respondents also mentioned experiencing self-doubt and guilt created by this unrelenting suspicion (Sumison, 2000). One of the respondents explained how as a male the boys would be drawn to you and then you would also get girls who would want to sit on your knee, this would in turn create feelings of unease and make him feel as though other adults were viewing him as a pervert for bouncing a little girl on his knee (Sumison, 2000).

Sumison (2000) also found that for all the male respondents in her study the emotional anguish associated with the likelihood of being accused of child sexual abuse was intensified by an awareness that such an accusation could lead to the loss of one's job and the demise of alternative job opportunities. A male respondent in her study described how a friend of his who worked in a child care centre was suddenly hauled down to a police station where afterwards all charges had been dropped. In the end it was revealed that he was falsely accused by a mother who had been concerned about seeing a male in a child care centre; this experience made him aware of how this could happen in an instant to anyone (Sumison, 2000).

Carrington and Skelton (2003) reveal that in a situation of white male student teachers, the greatest cause of possible and actual hostility happened to emanate from parents, school staff and fellow students. One of the white male lower primary student teachers in their study revealed that he had been treated in a hostile manner by parents in one of his placement schools and that he was also given the cold shoulder by staff (Carrington & Skelton, 2003). He elaborated on an instance of hostility from parents and revealed that during his pre-visit to a school one of the parents actually asked the teacher in the class who he was, what he was doing there and whether he was qualified to work with children (Carrington & Skelton, 2003). Another lower primary white male student teacher in the study carried out by Carrington and Skelton (2003) also revealed that he has heard from a couple of people that they have been frowned upon by people they know saying that they must be gay for opting to work with younger children. Carrington and Skelton (2003) indicate that there were reservations from school staff about men teaching very young children as one of the female respondents revealed that when she was on placement in a Reception class, the Head said that she thought it was a bit strange if men want to work in

Reception classes. Most of the respondents in the study carried out by Mulholland and Hansen (2003) experienced what they referred to as a ‘shock’ and being rather unsettled on commencing teacher education at university. A respondent in their study revealed that when he had first walked through the door in his early childhood class he felt that all eyes were on him and the people there were questioning his reasons for being there as a male in early childhood. He ultimately dealt with this situation by keeping to himself and doing what was expected of him, and as soon as all the barriers were dropped it was fine (Mulholland & Hansen, 2003).

A male upper primary teacher respondent in a study carried out by Skelton (2003) also revealed that it was parent’s wariness that prevented men from working with young children as it was seen as weird for men to go into the early years of teaching. She indicates that the male teacher respondents in her study may have believed that they avoided any chance of being seen as ‘suspect’ or ‘weird’ by choosing to teach in the higher years in a primary school as opposed to the lower years (Skelton, 2003). Moors (2010) also argued that although abuse is not gender explicit it is seemingly obvious why many men choose to avoid teaching young children if they are going to be branded as ‘suspicious’ before they even enter the classroom.

Research conducted by Skelton (2003) also showed how a specific worry of many respondents was the dilemma of being labelled as a potential child abuser. The respondents in her study were all male primary school teachers. One of the respondents in her study articulated his concern regarding the likelihood of wrongful allegations of child abuse in an environment where there exists a preoccupation with paedophilia. This respondent further expressed his concern by asserting that as a male it did concern him how a single child’s remarks could potentially end his entire career. This respondent backed up his view by arguing that teaching in a primary school is not accepted as a man’s job as certain people still believe that males who pursue primary school teaching have got suspect motives (Skelton, 2003). The implication of these findings gathered by Skelton (2003) is that the type of men who wish to pursue primary school teaching must possess an abnormal sexual interest in children.

Johnston et al. (1999) further went on to mention how these perceptions concerning the sex stereotyping of primary teaching result in a situation in which those males who choose primary teaching end up getting a negative reaction from their peers. A male trainee in the study carried out by Johnston et al. (1999) revealed how there are forever disapproving comments that you are training for a woman's course, and during Christmas friends would jokingly ask how they are managing with the 'wee kiddies'

A respondent in Simpson's (2005) study also revealed that people would laugh and mock a male primary school teacher, and such treatment towards them would affect how they dealt with other people and also made them cautious of the people they mixed with. Another respondent in her study revealed how he as a male teaching in the early years created awareness in himself that he was a freak, weird and in the incorrect profession (Simpson, 2005). The male respondents in Sumison's (2000) study similarly revealed that there was constant insecurity about whether they as males would be accepted by parents. A male respondent in her study indicated that the trust that would exist with a female teacher was just not there and he revealed that it is unpleasant being in a situation where your clients do not trust you with their children. The respondent further claimed that he had to put in a lot of energy in order to earn their approval and often they would end up applauding men in childcare but he also admits that working towards achieving such a positive response causes him a great deal of stress as he had to put in a great deal of time and effort into it whereas if he were female he would not have had to (Sumison, 2000). All of the male teacher respondents in Sumison's (2000) study had reported feelings of emotional anguish ensuing from gender-related incidents. One of the male teacher respondents in her study revealed that he did not feel very welcome and although he couldn't give a specific reason for this he did mention that he felt insecure and oversensitive and he did not know if this was because of his gender or teaching abilities (Sumison, 2000).

Jones (2006) argues that male student teachers are typically moved towards the higher years of teaching. One of the students that participated in her study revealed that during a teaching interview when expressing an aspiration to work with young children, one of the male inspectors said to him privately that they really want him but he should forget about teaching young children as they will not let it happen (Jones, 2006). A respondent in a study carried out by

Carrington and Skelton (2003) revealed that male lower primary student teachers were ridiculed by school staff as well as by other male teachers who were getting ready to teach in upper primary. The respondent revealed how upper primary student teachers asked another male student teacher if his choice to pursue the early years of teaching was wise and they also asked him why he intended on working with babies and referred to him as an old woman.

A respondent in a study carried out by Martino and Rezai-Rashti (2010) highlighted that homophobia occurs when parents perceive male teachers as gay. She indicates that parents prefer women as a result of a perception that men who want to teach young children must be gay and therefore parents end up with a powerful desire to put a stop to their children from being exposed to that kind of influence (Martino & Rezai-Rashti, 2010). The respondent also added that parents are wary that a gay teacher will enforce their beliefs on their child and they feel as though their young children wouldn't be able to communicate such happenings to them (Martino & Rezai-Rashti, 2010).

Sumison (1999) argues that one of his respondent's focus on his (the respondent's) personal context, rather than on broader socio cultural and political influences, had encouraged a perception that males in early childhood education are disadvantaged by their gender. The respondent indicated that he always wanted to be a supporter for men's rights, especially because it is frequently stated that women can do anything but there is no one standing up and saying men can do anything too. He went on to reveal how children are shaped and moulded at a young age, and that one of his reasons for going into the early years of teaching was to show children that they should not be restricted by their sex in their choice of career, and by being there teaching in the early years he was demonstrating to children that they can do whatever they want to (Sumison, 1999).

Carrington (2002) indicated how a respondent in his study revealed that males who pursue a career in the early years of teaching would trigger a questioning of their masculine identities. Another elementary teacher respondent in a study carried out by Allan (1993) proclaimed that a male elementary teacher should not be feminine at all and it is expected that a male teacher should be a man. The respondent further stated that that if a man was regarded as feminine then

this would be problematic since you are required to be a male role model which is the opposite of being feminine (Allan, 1993). Francis and Skelton (2001) argue that a number of learners, teachers as well as parents perceive men to naturally assume the position of a disciplinarian. Several male teachers in turn might therefore try to maintain this construction assigned to them in an attempt to accomplish a construction of 'solid' masculinity (Francis & Skelton, 2001). Francis and Skelton (2001) identify two ways how males utilize their interactions with learners to confirm their masculinity. Firstly they position themselves as 'one of the lads' with the male learners in the classroom and secondly they position themselves as 'other' to female learners, non-masculine male learners, and everything that is seen as feminine (Francis & Skelton, 2001).

Roulston and Mills (2000) have argued that within cultures of masculinity in schools, homophobia is frequently used as a tool for regulating homosexual masculinities. King (2000) discovered how some male primary school teachers are so apprehensive about being portrayed as gay for working with young children that they build tactics to refute such allegations. He indicates that these tactics include displaying pictures of their wives and children and wearing their wedding rings (King, 2000). Simpson (2005) similarly discovered that men possessed various tactics which helped to minimize the potential for being negatively stereotyped and this in turn helped to reduce potential anxiety and to overcome their related discomfort with the image of the job. She found that one way was to provide minimal or distorted information and by emphasizing more on the masculine aspects of the job, for example one of the male teacher respondents in her study deliberately left out the word 'primary' in an attempt to make his viewers think that he was in secondary education which was perceived as having a higher status (Simpson, 2005). Simpson (2005, p.376) argues that

Such strategies suggest a tension for men in non-traditional roles between the 'feminine' nature of the job and dominant discourses of (hegemonic) masculinity. Such discourses have a crucial role to play in promoting and sustaining the sexual division of labour and the social definition of tasks as either 'men's work' or 'women's work'.

Skelton (2012) has further indicated that tensions arise whereby the characteristics associated with stereotypical constructions of masculinity are at odds with those required of primary

teachers. She argues that within essentialist theorizing, a male teacher who displays empathy, caring, nurturance and so on will be regarded as too feminine and thus be categorised as a 'wimp' (Skelton, 2012). In an attempt to negotiate these tensions male teachers tend to play up stereotypical forms of masculinity in order to establish themselves as 'properly male' in a female environment (Skelton, 2012). Cushman (2005, p.235) indicates that "male teachers seem to be assigned (by colleagues, parents and the wider community) and then to assume (as a self-fulfilling prophecy) certain roles that have their genesis in stereotypical notions of masculinity". Cushman (2005) has also revealed that most of the males in her study had acknowledged that they were considered to be male role models and this encouraged them to carefully consider the kind of attitudes and behaviours they would like children to associate with the male gender. One of the respondents in her study revealed that the aspiration to be more sensitive and compassionate was frequently repressed by the limitations positioned on male's interactions with children and the distrust these created (Cushman, 2005). Cushman (2005) argues that in addition to coping with the difficulties all teachers face with the demands of teaching, the added pressures linked to an individual's maleness might, not surprisingly, discourage men from entering the teaching profession or promote their early departure from this line of work.

A respondent in Jones' (2007) study described how a head teacher had a discussion with him about a teaching position in a school, the head teacher instructed that he should only teach upper junior learners and not learners below that, this made the respondent cringe at the thought of this and he felt that it was a shame that he was being restricted to teaching only in the upper junior level in that school. Another respondent in her study revealed that during a teaching interview, one of the male supervisors went after him outside and indicated the following: "Look we really want you, but forget about teaching in the early years. We won't let it happen – and if you quote me on this I'll deny I ever said it" (Jones, 2007, p.185). A respondent in the study carried out by Martino and Rezai-Rashti (2010) revealed how male teachers are protected from homophobic regulating by managers who avoid placing men in the early years of teaching.

The respondent indicated that if parents were to complain about a particular teacher teaching a grade two class then he would be moved to another grade in the subsequent year (Martino &

Rezai-Rashti, 2010). Francis and Skelton (2001) indicate that the ‘managerial’ feature of masculinity may to a certain extent explain why male primary teachers are predominantly located in the upper years of primary schools where they are in charge of the management and control of the older learners and assume senior management posts. A respondent in a study carried out by Jones (2007, p.185) commented on the kind of attitudes he had to his employment in a primary school: “I don’t know if I’ll stay because you get some very funny reactions. I won’t get out of teaching but will get out of teaching front line... looking into deputy headship or headship would be an option for me.” Cameron (2001) argues that scepticism regarding men’s reasons for working in the early years of schooling is not merely that they benefit from their gender position with regards to material benefits and ambition, but also that uncertainties surrounding their masculinities begin to arise. She reveals that male workers’ masculinity is construed against dominant ideas and beliefs concerning gender appropriate caring (Cameron, 2001). Cameron (2001) further argues that contravening these gender boundaries directs uncertainty towards the individual’s gender identity and even the integrity of the person. Having discussed some of the negative perceptions of men who teach young children and how this contributes to the reluctance of males to pursue the early years of teaching, I now intend to discuss the perception of the teaching of young children as mothering and how this impacts on the reluctance of males entering the early years of teaching.

2.5 Teaching of young children – a case for mothering

Koutrous (2010) has argued that the classification of the ability to teach as “women’s work” and the inability of male teachers to adapt into the “mothering role” has held many back. A study carried out by Drudy (2008) has also discovered there had been an intensely perceived association among respondents between the nurturing role of women and their assumed higher responsibility for teaching very young learners in several Western societies. She indicates that there has been ideological connection involving women’s domestic responsibilities and their obligation to teaching, which suggests that females are more ‘naturally’ predisposed to roles of nurture than males (Drudy, 2008).

Ashley and Lee (2003) have argued in their study that the essential differences between primary school teaching and high school teaching that primary teachers’ initial concern is for the welfare

of the child and overall growth as an individual. They argue that in secondary teaching, on the other hand, teachers' emphasis is more on the curriculum and passing on knowledge of the subject matter to learners (Ashley & Lee, 2003). It is for this reason that they conclude that primary school teaching is perceived as a more caring occupation as compared to what is apparent in secondary schools (Ashley & Lee, 2003).

Skelton (2003) also found that certain men may decide to pursue upper primary teaching as opposed to lower primary teaching in an attempt to uphold more easily more traditional forms of masculinity. She found that many of the male upper primary teachers in her study distinguished between themselves and males who taught younger children (Skelton, 2003). These male upper primary teachers suggested that working with not children could not be characterized as proper teaching due to its connection with childcare and is therefore inappropriate for 'real men' (Skelton, 2003). This perception that working with young children is not real teaching was evident in Skelton's (2003) study where a male upper primary teacher revealed that in staffrooms there was an awareness that female teachers could anticipate not as much from young children with regards to their academic work and they sometimes focused more on mothering skills whereas male teachers were seen to be more concerned with the actual learning concerning academic work. Having highlighted the perception of the teaching of young children as mothering and how it impacts on the reluctance of males entering the early years of teaching, I will now go on to examine how the teaching of young children is seen as a low status profession and how this also contributes to the reluctance of males to pursue the early years of teaching.

2.6 Teaching young children as a low status profession

According to Cushman (2005) the status of primary school teachers seems to be directly linked to the believed intellectual requirements needed for an individual teacher's role, the apparent occupation requirements, the years of gained teaching experience and the specific group creating the judgment. Cushman (2005) found that the higher up in the school one teaches then the higher the status, according to several participants in her study. One respondent in her study revealed how his school caretaker came up to him and commended him for doing so well for moving from teaching juniors to teaching senior learners. The respondent revealed how the caretaker had believed that moving from teaching juniors to teaching seniors was a great jump in status, and he

went on to indicate how males teaching in the lower years have lower status than males teaching in the higher years and it is for this reason you get more men going into teaching senior learners. The respondent also indicated that he believed that both males and females teaching in a primary school do not get the status and respect from the community that they deserve, as parents often think that if you assume a position teaching higher up in a school then you are better as a teacher, which he believes is a complete injustice (Cushman, 2005). Coutler and Greg (2008, p.420) argue that “If it was natural for women to teach, if women were best suited to work with young, then because of this they should be seen as rendering a service out of love and should not expect high levels of remuneration or autonomy”. They have indicated that in a situation where ‘proper masculinity’ is constructed in opposition to femininity then one of the main reasons which has contributed to the low status of teaching as a potential occupation for men was the increasing numbers of women (Coutler & Greg, 2008).

A respondent in Martino and Rezai-Rashti’s (2010, p.252) study spoke distinctively about the gendered and heteronormative impact of parental inspection with regards to the regulation that is carried out on male teachers masculinities:

So if you meet a male teacher and they’re wearing a hockey shirt and they’re really just, I don’t know how to describe it. You know, it’s a stereotype... they have to show their masculinity. So if they’re very masculine, then it’s a different perception... They’re showing a way that they’re not gay... It’s basically if you’re showing yourself against a stereotypical view of what a gay male looks like and sounds like, then if you’re like that and you stay in that role for too long, then there will probably be questions after a few years even if you were macho.

The respondent in their study highlighted that regardless of being macho, the normative impact of such judgments and perceptions expand to questioning any male who decides to continue teaching in the early years instead of moving towards a career that would position him high up in the institutional hierarchy (Martino & Rezai-Rashti, 2010). A respondent in the study carried out by Sumison (1999) spoke about the negative reaction he received on his decision to become an

early childhood worker. He indicated that because many of the men in his immediate family were miners, his mother was really disappointed when he chose to become an early childhood worker instead. He further indicated that his father however was rather supportive but everyone on the other hand questioned his decision as a male going into this profession and they often thought that there may be something wrong with him (Sumison, 1999).

Sumison (1999) indicates that by assuming the position of an early childhood worker, the respondent, James, attempted to investigate the unconventional option to hegemonic masculinity that was privileged within the working-class environment in which he had lived all his life. She argues that his selection of a career went against his communities' expectations of masculinity, which had in terms of work emphasised the importance of providing monetarily for dependants by means of performing manual labour or mechanical or technical capability (Sumison, 1999). In other words by possessing a 'man's' job (Sumison, 1999). David (1996) also revealed that the issue of job status had come up frequently when he spoke to male elementary school teachers and although female teachers have had to extensively contend with this image problem, for male teachers the situation seemed to be worse. A male elementary teacher respondent in his study revealed that there was not a lot of prestige with the job and when he had to mention him being a teacher people would wonder when he was going to get a 'real' job (David, 1996).

Johnston et al. (1999) also highlight the perception that teaching children who are young is an extension to mothering and that meaningful learning would only begin when learners reached the secondary phase in school (Johnston et al., 1999). They argue that it is therefore likely that primary school teaching is considered to be 'low level' work that is not intellectually demanding and since intellectual power is powerfully linked with masculinity, males might consequently avoid this 'low level' work in favour of a more 'meaningful' profession (Johnston et al., 1999). Johnston et al. (1999) reveal that there continues to exist a traditional association between masculinity and the greater extent of intellectual control and access to power it permits, and this may play a fundamental role in explaining why primary teacher trainees are predominantly female.

Having discussed some of the ways in which the dominant notions of masculinity have contributed to the reluctance of males entering the early years of teaching as well as having briefly spoken about some of the negative experiences of male teachers who have pursued teaching in the early years, I will lastly go on to explore in greater detail male teachers who have resisted dominant forms of masculinity and have gone on to teach in the early years.

2.7 Males who have pursued the early years of teaching

According to Weist (2003), in order to improve our understanding of why such a small number of males opt to pursue a profession teaching young children, it becomes important for us to be made aware of the forces which encourage and discourage males from contemplating this line of work. She further states that it is also important to recognize the nature of the experiences of those men who do enter the profession of teaching young children (Weist, 2003). Having paid attention to some of the forces which have discouraged males from considering the profession, I now intend to focus on males who have gone into the early years of teaching by firstly highlighting the reasons which have encouraged them to do so and secondly by highlighting their experiences of being a male teacher in the early years of schooling.

Reasons for going into the early years of teaching

Evans and Jones (2008) found that males often enter the early years of teaching for the same reasons as women. These reasons are namely the enjoyment of working with children and possessing a desire to teach and create a difference in the lives of children (Evans & Jones, 2008). Thornton (2001) also found that the male participants in her study had chosen primary teaching because they believed it to be the foundation of education as well as socially essential. In another study Weist (2003) found three top factors influencing males to pursue the teaching of young children. The first factor highlighted by Weist (2003) is their prior experiences with working with young children. Mulholland and Hansen (2003) similarly found that most of the male primary school student teacher respondents in their study had confirmed that the experiences of working with children in their own extended families or as sport coaches or during work experience, were all incentives that encouraged them to go into the teaching profession. One of the male participants in the study carried by Sanatullova-Allison (2010) had

revealed that while he was in high school he was involved in a Big Brother-Big Sister Program which attached older learners as mentors to younger learners and he also offered his help at football camps during the summer. He indicated that it was these experiences which highly influenced his decision to become a teacher (Sanatullova-Allison, 2010). The second factor according to Weist (2003) which has influenced males to pursue the teaching of young children is their aspiration to model exemplary teachers from their own schooling. A male participant teaching in the early years in Sanatullova-Allisons (2010) study had described how his decision to become a teacher was influenced by one of his elementary school teachers. He mentioned how she really influenced him especially in terms of his desire to create a difference in his learners' lives, and he went on to indicate that he would be pleased if any of his learners would give him a phone call in 10 or 15 years just to say that he made a big influence in their life and to thank him for steering them in the right direction. For him this would be the ultimate gift of the teaching profession (Sanatullova-Allison, 2010).

Collins (2012) defines elementary education as the first six to eight years of a child's education; in other words a teacher who pursues teaching in elementary education would be given the task of teaching young children. The final factor that influences males to go into the early years of teaching is the influence of family role models (Weist, 2003). Sanatullova-Allison (2010) had similarly revealed that a male participant in her study had attributed his entry into the early years of teaching to his father who taught physical education to children in the elementary grades. Another male participant in her study revealed that he had known from the time he was in elementary school that he wanted to become a teacher and he indicated that this was to some extent as a result of his mother's influence who was a kindergarten teacher (Sanatullova-Allison, 2010).

All the male primary teacher participants in Thornton's (2001) study had revealed that their reasons for entering primary teaching were idealistic and pragmatic. They all had seen it as a worthwhile career that led to relatively rapid promotion and ultimately an adequate financial reward. They declared that they planned to move forward in their primary teaching careers and many intended to move rapidly up into management positions (Thornton, 2001). Thornton (2001) has argued that their aim to progress in their careers was attached to their awareness of

their rarity value; one of her participants had indicated that due to a shortage of male teachers, schools have a greater inclination to move you ahead in an attempt to retain those male teachers. Some of the male participants in her study also believed that primary teaching would stand to gain from a greater presence of males. These participants had attributed this to the increase of single parent families and the absence of a male role model in the lives of many young children (Thornton, 2001).

Sparks (2012) revealed how a male participant in her study had indicated that men often become teachers because they want to be empowered to break down stereotypes by showing children that they can be caring and nurturing. A male participant in a study by Coutler and McNay (1993) similarly revealed that his reason for opting to pursue teaching at the elementary level was because he believed that certain ideas about who can nurture and who can't are established in children at that age and in a lot of homes children would see the mother as the nurturer and the father as the parent who goes out and provides for the family. The participant maintained that unless the children are given something in their education that challenges these assumptions they will remain stuck with this belief and everything that they learn will be conditioned by this belief of the nature of men and women. He believed that by teaching at an elementary level he would be able to show children how to see men and women differently, which would enable them to be more open to expressing themselves, caring about other people and showing they care (Coutler & McNay, 1993).

The experiences of males teaching in the early years

Smith (2004, p.3) “found that the experience of male primary teachers is likely to be complex, contradictory and problematic”. She argues that their choice to enter ‘women’s work’ like primary teaching seems to produce a unique and multifaceted blend of advantages and disadvantages (Smith, 2003). Thornton (2001) has also argued that the involvement of men in professions involving young children is a social inclusion concern as the experiences and opportunities accessible to them can be expected to differ from those of their female colleagues. Johnston et al. (1999) discovered that once the young male teacher trainees in his study had dealt with the potential obstruction of primary teaching as a primarily female profession, they were no

longer uncomfortable about being a minority during teacher training and when they began to teach. A male participant in David's (1996) study similarly revealed that as a teacher of young children he did not have the time to mull over his minority status in his elementary school as he was too busy doing what all kindergarten teachers do such as reading to his students, singing songs and so forth. He maintained that he had never considered having more male colleagues at his school as he felt comfortable with the people he worked with. The participant did however indicate that as a man who teaches young children he had to deal with the kind of scrutiny that few female teachers ever have to undergo. He described experiences where he had parents removed students from his class purely because he was a man and he had also encountered resistance from female colleagues who did not think a man was capable of being nurturing enough with little children (David, 1996). Coutler and McNay (1993) reveal how a grade one male teacher participant in their study had found that no one actually believed his commitment to teaching young children. The participant described how male colleagues would suggest that once he had completed the year he would like to move up and when he had indicated that his intention was to remain in the same position even though he did have a chance to take a higher grade, they would look at him as though he were making it up (Coutler & McNay, 1993). A similar situation was experienced by a participant in David's (1996) study; however in this situation instead of insinuating that he should go into a higher grade, the participant's principal (a female) was determined to see him move into a management position. The participant revealed that being in such a position had never interested him as he enjoyed working with children and running a school just did not appeal to him (David, 2003).

Cleaver (2010) describes an experience where one of the male teacher participants in his study had maintained that children respond to kindness and warmth irrespective of whether it comes from a male or female. However the participant argued that he did think that sometimes boys respond differently to a male teacher; he attributed this to the fact that because he was male himself he would know about their tricks (Cleaver, 2010). Coutler and McNay (1993) found that all the male teacher participants in their study were concerned about their colleagues' restricted definitions of what it meant to be a man or a woman. All the male participants had found that the (male) principal or a (female) teacher in the school would proclaim that it was good that they have a man on staff to do physical education (Coutler & McNay, 1993). This kind of

stereotyping according to Coutler and McNay (1993) had displeased all the male participants in particular two of whom had disliked teaching physical education. A participant in David's (1996) study felt that as a male he was able to convey a different tone and perspective in the classroom. He explains how the little boys in his class especially are fearful at the beginning of the year because their fathers are typically the disciplinarians at home, and suddenly here is this man who is going to be their teacher. He then indicates that as time would go by they become relaxed and open to the situation (David, 1996). Several of the male participants in Coutler and McNay's (1993) study had thought it was important to let children see men feeling 'emotional'. One of the participants revealed how a children's story had moved him to tears when he was reading it aloud and the class had also remembered another incident of him showing outward emotion at the farewell party for his teaching partner. These male participants had believed that it was vital to let children see men in a different light (Coutler & McNay, 1993).

2.8 Changing mindsets to encourage more male teachers to enter the early years of teaching

Marsiglio (2009) indicates that if there was a more balanced ratio of teachers then this would send a powerful message to young children that learning in a school setting is neither masculine nor feminine but rather a human experience. He argues that male teachers can demonstrate to both boys and girls that men are capable of providing a supportive learning atmosphere and that young people should be encouraged to see careers as open to individuals irrespective of gender stereotypes (Marsiglio, 2009). Thornton and Bricheno (2006) further argue that teaching is a specialised and intellectual profession appropriate for both males and females who undertake the required training and possess the right personal skills and attitudes. Carrington et al. (2008) have also indicated that policy-makers need to recognize that male and female teachers must confront stereotypical beliefs and offer other viewpoints, in an effort to release children from the restrictions of leading constructions of males and females. Cushman (2005) argues that just as all teachers have the responsibility to ensure that schools provide supportive learning atmospheres for all learners, male teachers also require support and encouragement so that they are able to exercise the full range of opportunities and practices open to them as primary school teachers.

The situation at hand breeds confusion, stress and a pressure to conform to a hegemonic masculinity contrary to the nurturing affinities of many male primary school teachers (Cushman, 2005). Marsiglio (2009) also argues that presently men who develop a passion to teach young children are too frequently still stigmatized according to traditional definitions of what it means to be a man. Cushman (2005) further indicates that at present men do not appear to ‘fit’ comfortably into the culture of primary schools and they feel isolated in their inability to care and nurture in the ways that are inherent in the practices of most female teachers. They often feel as though they are being scrutinized in a role attained for reasons other than their own merits (Cushman, 2005). Cushman (2005) argues that for those males who do teach because of a love for children, their dedication to the profession and their optimism when faced with never ending scrutiny and difficulties categorize them as a unique and extraordinary group. However until the obstacles and attitudes that lie beneath these difficulties are dealt with and lessened, it is unlikely that the number of males to females in the primary years of teaching will change (Cushman, 2005). Carrington and Skelton (2003) indicate that at an institutional level, procedures must be put in place that assists in encouraging open debates and discussions surrounding the implications of creating a more inclusive teaching profession. There is also a need for teachers who can effectively tackle the needs of both male and female learners and, via their individual demonstrations of inclusive practices, inspire children to travel outside stereotypical role expectations (Cushman, 2005). Lastly the calling for more males in the early years of teaching, according to Marsiglio (2009), should not be understood as being a condemnation of women’s general teaching capabilities or their role in boys learning more explicitly, it instead must be understood as a way to encourage youth to view careers as open to individuals irrespective of the stereotypes attached to one’s gender.

2.9 Theoretical Framework

Anfara and Mertz (2006, p.xxvii) “define theoretical frameworks as any empirical or quasi-empirical theory of social and/or psychological processes, at a variety of levels (e.g. grand, mid-range, and explanatory), that can be applied to the understanding of phenomena.” Drawing from evidence in the literature signifying the important role that the construction of masculinities play

in influencing the reluctance of males to enter the early years of teaching, I have decided to use Connell's (1995) construction of masculinities as the framework to analyse my data.

2.10 Masculinity as an active construction

Connell (1996, p.210) indicates that "Masculinities do not exist prior to social behaviour, either as bodily states or as fixed personalities". Morrell (2005) identifies masculinity as something which has been changing, is fluid and can be the entity of social, political and individual work. According to Connell (1996) masculinities exist as individuals perform them, and they are achieved in everyday behaviour or organizational life, as constructions of social practice. Masculinity as an active construction will be used to understand and interpret how the experiences encountered in each of the male participants' lives have contributed to the specific form of masculinity that they exhibit which ultimately influences their decision to avoid pursuing the early years of teaching.

2.11 Multiple masculinities in South Africa

According to Connell (1995) in the midst of an increasing awareness of the interactions amongst gender, race and class it has become customary to distinguish multiple masculinities. Connell (1996, p.208) indicates that "different cultures, and different periods of history construct masculinity differently". Connell (1996) argues that in multicultural societies there are prone to be multicultural explanations of masculinity, and more than one type of masculinity can exist inside a particular cultural setting. Evans and Jones (2008) similarly argue that the notion of a single fixed unified masculinity is difficult to justify, instead there are multiple masculinities on offer for men to choose from. Morrell (2006) reveals that boys and men choose how to behave and this choice is built from several available repertoires. "Such choices are never entirely free, because the available repertoires differ from context to context and because the resources from which masculinity is constructed are unevenly distributed" (Morrell, 2006, p.14). I have used this theory of multiple masculinities in order to describe the kind of masculine identities that the participants in my own study have adopted as a result of their own experiences and roles they play in society.

According to Morrell (2001) constructions of South African masculinity not only reflect the raging history of the country but are also partly the reason for this history. Multiple masculinities are shaped by the interactions between gender, race and class (Smith, 2008). During apartheid, hegemonic masculinity had been exhibited amongst Afrikaans speaking white men (Morrell, 2001). Black men on the other hand experienced non-hegemonic masculinity (Smith, 2008). However Morrell (1998) has indicated that as much as black men were emasculated in some ways during apartheid, within their homesteads they assumed dominant roles and women played submissive roles, thereby ensuring that African masculinity remained hegemonic. This theory helped me to highlight and understand how the male participants in my own study respond to the research questions based on their particular racial and cultural background.

2.12 Hierarchies of masculinities

Connell (1995) indicates that identifying that there are multiple masculinities is only a first step; there is also a need to examine the relations between them. He identifies four relations among masculinities i.e. Hegemony, Subordination, Complicity and Marginalization (Connell, 1995). Hegemonic masculinity is regarded as the configuration of gender performance that symbolizes the presently acknowledged solution to the problem of the authorization of patriarchy, that guarantees (or is assumed to guarantee) the dominance of men and the subordination of women (Connell, 1995). The remaining three relations among masculinities are non-hegemonic masculinities that emphasise a move away from power (Bhana, 2002). Subordinate masculinities are displayed by men whose behaviour threatens the legitimacy of hegemonic masculinities, for example homosexual men (Connell, 1995). Connell (1995) indicates that complicit masculinity refers to accepting the patriarchal order of society excluding the pressures or dangers of being the forefront supporters of patriarchy. Marginalized masculinities refer to “the interplay of gender with other structures such as class and race which creates further relationships between masculinities” (Connell, 1995, p.80). The hierarchies of masculinities were used to identify in this study what role dominant and subordinate masculinities had played in influencing the decision by each of the participants to not pursue the early years of teaching.

2.13 Masculinities and schooling

Male teachers who are employed within non-traditional sectors of a school, for example in home economics, dance, drama, early childhood studies or in the early years of a primary school, are more prone to experience subordination inside a school's social organization of masculinity (Roulston & Mills, 2000). Embedded in a great deal of this subordination is that males employed in these sectors of work are not 'real men' (Roulston & Mills, 2000). Fletcher (1994) has argued that boys endure many disadvantages in life due to the way society encourages particular kinds of 'maleness'. He indicates that this serves to limit options for boys (Fletcher, 1994). Therefore this theory of masculinities was best suited towards this study as it provided an appropriate platform for the researcher to understand why males are reluctant to enter the early years of teaching by firstly understanding how teaching the early years is regarded as a profession not suited for 'real men' (Roulston & Mills, 2000) as well as how men employed in the early years of teaching seems to bring about a questioning of their masculine identities (Cameron, 2001).

2.14 Conclusion

The first section of this chapter provided a review of literature on the reasons why males are reluctant to pursue teaching in the early years. Although there have been studies conducted around teachers and/or masculinities in South Africa (Bhana, de Lange, & Mitchell, 2009; Morrell & Jewkes, 2011; Morrell, 1998) studies conducted more specifically on the lack of males in the early years of teaching have been scarce. The literature in this chapter hence dealt more with the studies of men, masculinities and teaching in the early years particularly from the West as there has been limited research on this matter in the South African context. Another important factor to be taken to account was that although many of the Western studies focused on the experiences of male pre-service teachers who were currently pursuing the early years of teaching (Johnston et al., 1999; Montecinos & Nielsen, 2004; Mulholland & Hansen, 2005; Smedley, 1998; Warwick, Warwick & Hopper, 2012; Weaver-Hightower, 2011), there had been limited research focusing on male pre-service teachers who did not opt to go into the early years of teaching and their reasons for doing so. The multiple or diverse ways in which 'dominant notions of masculinity' have contributed to the reluctance of males entering the early years of teaching were discussed in this chapter and the experiences of male teachers who are in the early years of teaching were also highlighted briefly. Having drawn from evidence in the literature signifying

the important role that the construction of masculinities played in influencing the reluctance of males to enter the early years of teaching, I chose Connell's (1995) construction of masculinities as the theoretical framework; and this was highlighted and discussed in concluding this chapter. The subsequent chapter of this dissertation goes onto discuss the research methods and data collection instruments that were used to collect and analyse the data for this study.

Chapter Three Methodology

3.1 Introduction

According to Creswell (2009, p.3) “research designs are plans and the procedures for research that span the decisions from broad assumptions to detailed methods of data collection and analysis.” The selection of a research design centres on the nature of the research problem or concern being tackled, the researcher’s individual experience, and audiences for the study (Creswell, 2009). During this process decisions need to be made regarding the methods which are most suited for the specific aims of the study and data collection instruments must then be designed to carry out the job (Bell, 2010). A methodology as indicated by Anderson (1990) simply offers a separate explanation of what was done and how it was done. It strengthens the research design which comprises, amongst other things, the plan for research design and the methods and actual research tools used in the data collection process (Wisker, 2009). This chapter will therefore present a description and discussion of the research design and methodology that has been adopted for this study. In order to do this, this chapter will firstly provide a discussion on the research approach and paradigm that was most suitable for this study. Thereafter I will go on to provide a description of the research site where this study had been conducted. Thirdly a discussion on the sampling procedure that was used will be presented as well as a description and discussion of the data collection process where individual interviews were used to collect data. The limitations of this study will then be discussed in addition to the validity and reliability of this study. This will be followed by a description of the ethical considerations taken in this study. Lastly a description and discussion of the data analysis process will be provided.

3.2 A qualitative research approach

This study engaged with a qualitative research approach in order to generate relevant and reliable data on the specific topic for this study. The objective of qualitative research is to tackle the outside world as opposed to specific research settings like in laboratories, and to understand, describe and at times explain social phenomena ‘from the inside’ in several diverse ways (Flick, 2007). It examines individuals, institutions, and phenomena within the context in which they

occur and here the researcher is interested in acquiring an in-depth understanding of behaviour and the reasons for that behaviour (Salkind, 2012). Leedy and Ormrod (2010) describe a qualitative approach as an approach that concentrates on phenomena that take place in natural settings and that entails studying such phenomena entirely in their complexity. They also indicate that this approach can disclose the outlook of specific situations, settings, processes, relationships, systems, or individuals (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010). In this study I sought to find out why most male BEd students at Edgewood Campus are reluctant to pursue teaching in the early years, as the statistics show that very few of the total number of male students at this campus are specialising in the Foundation Phase which would allow them to teach learners in the lower grades (grades R to 3) (DMI, 2013). A qualitative research approach was therefore appropriate for this study because it allowed me to gain insights into why male students in this university are not willing to specialise and/or teach learners in the Foundation Phase.

Lichtman (2010) indicates that because qualitative researchers are interested in meaning and interpretation they typically do not test a hypothesis; this contrasts with quantitative research which on the other hand is designed to test hypotheses. She argues that “qualitative research is not designed to test hypotheses or to generalize beyond the specific group at hand” (Lichtman, 2010). Furthermore a difference between qualitative research and quantitative research lies in the pursuit of understanding and in-depth inquiry (Henning, 2004).

Henning (2004) reveals that a quantitative study focuses on the control of all components and variables and the respondents are generally not open to convey data that cannot be described by predetermined tools. In a qualitative study the variables are not controlled since it is precisely this openness and natural development of action and representation that is intended to be captured, and it is necessary to explain in an argument what the phenomenon being studied is about by making use of evidence from the data and literature (Henning, 2004). In qualitative research the intention is not to position this understanding within limitations of an instrument that has been designed in advance, as this will confine the data to those exact limitations (Henning, 2004). My study did not test a hypothesis but rather focused on exploring my participant’s perspectives, experiences, thoughts, feelings, opinions, concerns and anxieties about ‘men’ teaching in the early years of schooling. A qualitative rather than quantitative research

method was also used because it allows the researcher to secure and protect the communication and symbol-using capabilities of participants just as these were understood and intended by the participants (Chesebro & Borisoff, 2007). Having discussed the research approach that was taken in this study I will now go on to discuss the constructionist research paradigm which was used to guide this study.

3.3 The interpretivist research paradigm

Guba and Lincoln (1994) define a paradigm as the prime belief system or world view that directs the investigation. This research study relies on an interpretivist research paradigm. The main reason for using an interpretive approach is because interpretivists aim to understand and describe how people make sense of their worlds as well as how they make meaning of their particular actions (Bertram & Christiansen, 2010). According to Flick (2007, p.5)

“qualitative research is intended to approach the world ‘out there’ (not in specialized research settings such as laboratories) and to understand, describe and sometimes explain social phenomena ‘from the inside’ in a number of different ways”

This research method is thus suited to the purpose of this study, namely in terms of understanding why most male BEd students at Edgewood Campus are reluctant to pursue teaching in the early years. I will now go on to describe the place which was chosen as the research context for this study.

3.4 The research context

I chose to conduct this research at the University of KwaZulu-Natal’s Edgewood campus which is the university’s primary site for teacher education training (UKZN, 2009). Edgewood campus, formerly known as Edgewood College before its incorporation in 2001, offers initial and in-service teacher education training as well as university higher degrees in an extensive choice of specialisations in education; this includes the implementation of research and consultancy (UKZN, 2009). The campus is located in Pinetown, approximately 20 minutes away from Durban (UKZN, 2009). The School is also actively connected with policy-making in education

in South Africa and adds to the university's international profile by participating in a wide range of academically related international activities (UKZN, 2009). The table below shows the student population at Edgewood campus in the year 2011. It shows the number of male and female students at the campus according to their race and age group (DMI, 2013).

		RACE					
Age Group	Gender	African	Coloured	Indian	White	Other	Grand Total
Under 24	Female	719	39	478	45	2	1283
	Male	486	9	93	15		603
Under 24 Total		1205	48	571	60	2	1886
24+	Female	1641	21	90	14		1766
	Male	720	9	35	9		773
24+ Total		2361	30	125	23		2539
Grand Total		3566	78	696	83	2	4425

Table 2: Demographics of students at Edgewood campus, 2011

In 2007 I pursued my undergraduate studies at Edgewood campus, specialising in the Foundation/Intermediate Phase and I noticed a scarcity of males in the ECD and Foundation Phase in particular. I am now a Foundation Phase educator and I have made a similar observation in my own school where there are no males teaching in the Foundation Phase. I chose to conduct this research because I was interested to find out why there are so few male students (at Edgewood) who enter into the Foundation Phase. I also chose to conduct my study at Edgewood campus because it is a teacher training institution and this made it easier for me to gather a sample that was suitable for my study. I will now discuss in detail the sample which had been chosen for this study.

3.5 Sampling

Since most of the educational phenomena consist of a large number of units it would thus be impractical to test, interview or observe every single member of the population under controlled settings in order to achieve principles encompassing universal validity (Koul, 1984). Sampling is therefore used since it is not possible to include the entire population (Koul, 1984).

Kumar (2005) defines sampling as the process of selecting a few (a sample) from a bigger group (the sampling population) in order to serve as a foundation for predicting the rate of occurrence of an unknown piece of information, situation or end result with regards to the larger group. A sample must first be defined and selected for a reason (Wisker, 2009). The selection of a sampling strategy according to Maykut and Morehouse (1994) relies upon the focus of inquiry and the researcher's judgment as to which approach will generate the clearest understanding of the phenomena under study. The sampling strategy used in this study was carefully considered and selected in order to gather a sample that was suitable for the nature and purpose of this study.

Punch (2005, p.187) indicates that sampling in qualitative research is just as important as sampling in quantitative research. However he also argues that there is a fundamental difference in sampling in the two approaches (Punch, 2005). In quantitative research the essential concept is usually probability sampling in which dimensions of variables are derived from a sample chosen to represent a larger population, whereas qualitative research would seldom utilize probability sampling but would rather use some kind of deliberate sampling (Punch, 2005). I did not intend to generalize beyond the research sample and because of this I opted to explore why a specific group of (male) undergraduate students at Edgewood Campus were reluctant to pursue the early years of teaching as well as how their constructions of masculinity perhaps influenced their decisions to select specialisations which centre around teaching the higher grades as opposed to the lower grades, more specifically grades R to three. A purposive sampling procedure was therefore employed in this study. Punch (2005) indicates that purposive sampling is the term frequently used to describe sampling done in a deliberate way with a particular purpose or focus on mind. Kumar (2005) also claims that in purposive sampling the key consideration is the judgment of the researcher with regards to who can offer the greatest information to achieve the aims of the study. The researcher should therefore only approach people who they believe are likely to possess the required information (Kumar, 2005).

I selected only male undergraduate BEd students who were not specialising in the Foundation Phase to participate in my study. Purposive sampling identifies those people who have relevant information about and have experienced the process under consideration (Symon & Hornby, 1994). Purposive sampling is also used to collect data from people who are easily available to the

researcher because of efficiency or convenience (Potter, 1996). I selected male undergraduate BEd students from Edgewood campus to participate in the study since I am also a student at this institution and I had easy access to these students. I tried to ensure that I selected a diverse group of students who emerged from different backgrounds. I successfully selected a sample of 15 male students between the ages of 19-28. This sample consisted of seven African students, four Indian students, two white students and two coloured students respectively. The racial demographics of the male population at Edgewood revealed that the male population is unevenly distributed according to race and that it shows that there are more African and Indian male students at the campus and fewer coloured and white male students (DMI, 2013). I therefore experienced difficulty in obtaining as many coloured and white participants as I did African and Indian participants which in turn resulted in an uneven representation of my sample according to the number of students from each race group. In order to enhance this study I have provided the reader with a better understanding of the participating male students by mentioning certain biographical details of each participant. The table below provides a comparative biographical background of all the participants that I selected for this study:

Name (*pseudonym)	Age	Race	Hometown	Phase	Year of Study
*Scelo	19	African	Inanda	Senior/FET	1st year
*Thabiso	29	African	Umzinto	Senior/FET	1st year
*Senzo	21	African	Eshowe	Senior/FET	4th year
*Sbu	28	African	Mtunzini	Senior/FET	1st year
*Raj	28	Indian	Chatsworth	Senior/FET	4th year
*Anand	25	Indian	Tongaat	Senior/FET	4th year
*Jayden	23	Indian	Hillcrest	Int/Senior	3rd year
*Simon	24	white	Warner Beach	Senior/FET	4th year
*Kaylyn	21	Indian	Pietermaritzburg	Senior/FET	2nd year
*Mlungisi	20	African	Ladysmith	FET	2nd year
*Asibonge	19	African	Empangeni	FET	2nd year
*Manjimela	25	African	Ntshenimyama	FET	4th year

*Joel	19	coloured	Treasure Beach	Senior/FET	2nd year
*Leeshaun	22	coloured	Pietermaritzburg	Senior/FET	4th year
*Mike	21	white	Durban	Int/Senior	4th year

Table 3: Listing of respondents

Having discussed the sampling procedure that was used to gather a sample for this study, I will now go on to describe the data collection process in which individual interviews were used.

3.6 Data collection process: individual interviews

Flick (2007) reveals that interviews are one of the key approaches in collecting data in qualitative research. Flick (2007) further indicates that the qualitative interview is an important place for investigating the ways in which participants experience and understand their world. An individual interview was therefore the chosen method of data collection in this qualitative study.

Lichtman (2010) defines qualitative interviewing as a term used to describe a group of methods that allows the interviewer to engage in a dialogue or conversation with the participant which is usually coordinated and directed by the interviewer. The advantage of using an interview rather than a questionnaire is that in an interview the interviewer can follow up ideas, probe for responses and examine motives as well as feelings, whilst a questionnaire cannot (Bell, 2010). Punch (2005) further argues that an interview serves as an excellent method of gaining access to individual's perceptions, meanings, and explanations of specific situations as well as constructions of reality. An interview was found to be the best data collection tool to use in this study since rich informative data needed to be generated from each participant and this was unlikely to occur through the use of a questionnaire. The interview allowed me as a researcher to easily gain access to the reasons why these male BEd students are reluctant to specialise in the early years of teaching. In addition to this it allowed me to probe their responses in order to discover whether the constructions of masculinity had played a role in influencing their reluctance to pursue the early years of teaching, and also to explore how this had played a role.

The interview format, according to Lichtman (2010), can vary from one that is highly structured to one with minimal or no structure. A semi-structured life-world interview tries to understand subject matter of everyday living from the participant's individual perspectives (Flick, 2007). Flick (2007) argues that this method of interviewing closely resembles an everyday conversation, but because it is a professional interview it has a specific goal and it involves a particular approach as well as technique. It is semi-structured and will have a sequence of themes to be covered as well as some prepared questions whilst at the same time there is openness with regards to changes of sequence and question forms in order to follow up on the answers given by the interviewees (Flick, 2007). Lichtman (2010) similarly indicates that in a semi-structured interview although there exists a general set of questions and format for all participants, the interviewer can alter the questions as the situation demands. In this study a semi-structured individual interview (see Appendix 3) requiring open ended responses was used in order to develop an understanding of the male BEd students' perspectives, experiences, thoughts, feelings, opinions and apprehensions with regards to their reluctance to teach in the early years.

I made a concerted effort to ensure that every potential participant had been approached in a pleasant and friendly manner which served to encourage them not only to participate but to also make them feel more comfortable and at ease whilst being interviewed. Bell (2010) has also indicated that although laying down specific rules for conducting an interview is problematic; displaying good manners will be the best way to ensure that the interview occurs smoothly. Marshall and Rossman (2011) also indicate that one of the most significant features of an interviewer's approach is communicating to the participants' that their viewpoints are valuable and useful. Therefore I treated each participant with respect and I listened to their responses attentively. All participants were thanked for their participation and time.

Rubin and Rubin (2005) reveal that the difference between interviews and normal conversations is that the researcher is required to keep a record of what was said for the subsequent analysis process. Consequently how the interview data will be recorded needs to be taken into consideration when planning research (Punch, 2009). The two most common ways of recording interviews according to Powney and Watts (1987) are field notes and audio tape recording. They argue that full note taking is challenging at the speed of normal conversation' it can interrupt the

interviewers' concentration and the flow of an interviewee's responses and possibly lead to the collection of only a small portion of the data that would have been possible to accumulate from an interaction (Powney & Watts, 1987). An audio tape recorder on the other hand allows the interviewer to concentrate on the topic and the dynamics of the interview (Flick, 2007). Flick (2007) also indicates that tape recorders allow for the interviewee's tone, pauses and so forth to be recorded in a permanent way and it enables the researcher to return to the material over and over again for re-listening. Bell (2010) indicates that this method of recording is especially important in a study like this which will require content analysis, as this also requires one to be able to listen to the data a number of times in order to make sense of it. Furthermore it is very useful as it allows the researcher to code, summarize and to note down comments that are of special interest without needing to make notes during the interview (Bell, 2010). I decided to use an audio tape recorder to record the interviews for this study. The interviews were recorded in this manner because it was found that tape recording would obtain the fullest and most accurate record (Walker, 1985).

The interviews were carried out on Edgewood campus during the month of October 2012 at various places located on the campus. Since there are predominantly female students at Edgewood Campus (DMI, 2013), finding male students who were willing to participate in the study proved to be rather difficult. This difficulty was heightened in my quest to find an even representation of male participants across all the four dominant race groups in South Africa. Whilst finding Black and Indian male students to participate in the study was not very difficult, finding coloured and white students to participate proved to be extremely difficult. As mentioned before, this was due to the racial demographics at Edgewood Campus where the male students are majority Black and Indian and very few are coloured and white (DMI, 2013). Below is a description of the data collection process that was carried out over a period of three days:

DAY 1

On day one of the interviewing process I randomly approached male students in the main campus building (an area frequented by most students) to participate in the study by meeting with me later to be interviewed. Most of the male students I had approached in the main campus

building were reluctant to sacrifice their time to participate in the study. Many of them claimed that they were too busy with assignments or were late for their lectures. I therefore tried to reschedule a few interviews to accommodate these students but many of them did not arrive at the interview as we had arranged. I was then compelled to approach male students on campus and conduct the individual interview with each of them on the spot, with their permission. One African male student who had been approached in the main campus building agreed to participate on condition I did not take up too much of his time. Bell (2010) has revealed that when you arrange an interview with a participant you need to inform them how long you think the interview will take and ask them if they are fine with the time arrangement. She indicates that if the participant says that the anticipated time is too long then the researcher will just need to do his/her best to discuss the main issues (Bell, 2010). In this study I anticipated that the duration of the interview would be an hour long, however most of the male students mentioned that one hour was too long because they had prior commitments. In order to counteract this problem, I reassured all of them that the interview would not be longer than 30 minutes and I tried my best to discuss the main issues. During the interviewing process I realized that time was no longer a concern and I was able to capture my participants' responses and generate useful data. Whilst conducting the interview with the first African male participant in my study, I realized that the noise levels inside the main campus building made recording the interview difficult. Although the main campus building was an area frequented by most students it was much too noisy to effectively conduct an interview in. Finding a more suitable venue on the campus to conduct the interviews proved to be rather difficult. I walked around and eventually decided to sit in a quiet corner outside the library and approach potential participants to be interviewed. This worked fine as I did manage to interview three more African male students and since it was much quieter outside it made the interviewing process and the recording of the interview much more efficient. However there were not many male students frequenting this area so I decided to go back into the campus building to approach more potential participants. I managed to get two Indian male participants during this time. I decided to use an empty lecture room in which to conduct my interview. During the interview with my first Indian participant I had accidentally pressed the wrong button during the recording process and only realized this after I had completed the entire interview with the participant. This resulted in the entire interview not being recorded. I explained this situation to the participant and he was kind enough to redo the interview however

his responses in this redone interview were not as detailed as his responses in the first interview. This experience taught me to be more thorough and have a back-up recording device as well as to check that the device is recording during the interview instead of only checking to see that it has been recorded at the end. During my interview with the second Indian male participant we were about almost done with the interview when a lecturer and students began walking in as a scheduled lecture was about to take place in that venue. This somewhat disrupted the interview process but luckily we were almost done and the few questions I had left the participant agreed to answer outside the lecture room. As mentioned earlier on I had scheduled meetings with potential participants for the afternoon at specific times and places which they indicated would be more convenient for them. I proceeded to wait for these male students at the designated meeting places arranged with each of them. However out of the three male students that I arranged alternate times with, none pitched up to be interviewed. Based on this experience I decided against arranging alternative times with students and only conducted interviews with those students who were available to be interviewed immediately. This proved to be a better option instead wasting time waiting for potential participants who would not turn up. By the end of day 1 I had interviewed four African students and two Indian students.

DAY 2

On day 2 I decided again to sit outside the library and approach potential participants. I interviewed three African male participants by doing this. I felt that I had interviewed enough African male students at this point and what was now required was a more even representation of the other race groups (i.e. Indian, coloured and white students). I proceeded to go into the main campus building where most of the students were located and this time I looked specifically only for Indian, white and coloured male students. A quiet environment was essential for the interview process to be carried out effectively and I found that students were often reluctant to participate if they were asked to move to a quieter area in order to be interviewed. Whilst on the lookout for potential participants I therefore made a concerted effort to also approach students who were located in quieter areas in the main campus building and would not be inconvenienced by being asked to move to another area to be interviewed. I interviewed two more Indian participants and felt that at this point I had interviewed a sufficient number of Indian students for my study. I thus decided to turn my attention towards finding only white and coloured

participants as I did not have a single student from either of these race groups as yet. The task of finding white and coloured male participants was a painstakingly long and frustrating process. I scanned the entire campus in search of white and coloured male participants and when I finally did come across a few white male students it was extremely disappointing when they refused to participate. Nevertheless at the end of day 2 I did interview my first white male student. In total I interviewed three African students, two Indian students and 1 white student.

DAY 3

On day three I again struggled to find white and coloured male participants. The search for male students belonging to these two race groups turned out to be a very time consuming process. As mentioned before the table of racial demographics of the male population at Edgewood revealed that the male population is unevenly distributed according to race and shows that there are more African and Indian male students at the campus and fewer coloured and white male students (DMI, 2013). Hence I experienced greater difficulty in locating white and coloured male students as they were part of a scarce population group at Edgewood Campus. I searched for and asked the few white male students that I was able to find on the campus if they were willing to be interviewed, and after quite some time I finally came across one white male student who agreed to participate. The search for coloured male participants at the campus proved to be even more daunting than finding white male participants. I managed to locate only two coloured male students on the campus, but I was fortunate that they both agreed to participate. By the end of day 3 I had interviewed one white male participant and two coloured male participants respectively. I will now go on to highlight and discuss some of the limitations of this study which were largely as a result of difficulties experienced during the data collection process.

3.7 Limitations

According to Anderson (1990, p.8) “generalization attempts to discover whether similar things will happen in new situations”. In this study only one higher education institution in South Africa was chosen as the research site; this in turn limits the generalizability of the findings. Punch (2005) indicates that in a qualitative study such as this the concept of transferability is preferred to generalizability and the three aspects which he has focused on that deal with and enhance transferability were adopted in this study. Firstly, in this study an attempt was made to ensure

that the sample group was diverse enough to encourage the findings to other situations (Punch, 2005). The participants in this study were racially diverse since participants belonging to each of the four dominant race groups in South Africa (i.e. African, white, Indian, coloured) were chosen. Secondly the context of this study has been described so that the reader will be able to judge the transferability of the findings to other situations. Lastly on the level of abstraction of the concepts in the data analysis, an attempt was made to ensure that they are at a sufficient level of abstraction in order to permit their application to other settings (Punch, 2005).

Basically in order to counteract the limitation of this study with regards to its generalizability, descriptions were used in order to provide some details so that the reader can judge whether the findings can be transferred to another context. In the study although I had a racially diverse group of students, they were not evenly represented according to their numbers as I had fewer white and coloured participants as compared to Indian and African participants. Therefore this was another limitation of this study as the sample did not consist of an even number of students from each race group. In this particular study time had been a really problematic factor hindering the data collection process. Firstly in this study many of the potential male participants were unwilling to sacrifice their time due to studying commitments, which made the task of gathering a suitable sample in a limited period of time rather difficult. In order to counteract this factor I decided to remain at the campus for an entire day seeing as the students did not have a fixed time for being done with lectures for the day, and their timetables varied. Consequently I was able to approach male students during whichever time they were available as some were free in the mornings but not in the afternoons and vice versa. Secondly not having a suitable venue to conduct the interviews hindered the data collection process as a lot of time was spent looking for a venue to conduct each interview. I found that potential participants were often reluctant to move to a suitable venue to be interviewed. I counteracted this limitation by approaching potential participants situated in areas that were quiet and suitable venues for conducting an interview. Having discussed the limitations of this study I will now describe its validity and reliability.

3.8 Validity and reliability

In research, ‘validity’ refers to the extent to which the research presents a correct depiction of the situation and/or individuals under examination and it is frequently identified as ‘internal validity’

(Wisker, 2009). Bell (2010) argues that no matter what procedure has been used for data collection, it must always be critically examined in order to assess the extent to which it is expected to be reliable and valid.

Henning (2004, p.148) indicates that

To validate is to check (for bias, for neglect, for lack of precision and so forth), to question (all procedures and decisions- critically), to theorise (looking for and addressing theoretical questions that arise throughout the process – not just towards the end) and to discuss and share research actions with peers as critical in-process reviewers.

Creswell (2009) indicates that qualitative validity involves a process where the researcher verifies the accuracy of the findings by making use of specific procedures. In order to enhance the validity of this qualitative research study the following procedures were employed:

Firstly, in order to enhance the study's external validity, detailed descriptions were used in the study to describe its findings. External validity according to Wisker (2009) refers to the degree to which the collected data from a group or situation is able to be generalized to a wider population. This description was thus used to possibly give readers a better knowledge of the research setting and to provide the discussion with a touch of shared experiences (Creswell, 2009). In other words it would serve to equip readers with the necessary information required to be able to judge whether the results of the situation studied can be transferred to a similar context with other male BEd students. Secondly I asked a fellow researcher to challenge the findings of the study by examining the data; this worked towards ensuring that anything that I had missed was picked up by the second researcher. This procedure was employed seeing as Creswell (2009, p.192) has revealed that a strategy "involving an interpretation beyond the researcher and invested in another person, adds validity to an account."

The issue of bias in research was another factor that needed careful consideration when attempting to enhance the validity of this research study. Bell (2010) has argued that a number of issues can lead to bias and there are consistent dangers in research conducted by individual

researchers who hold powerful opinions about the subject they are researching. As a Foundation Phase teacher myself and a student at the very same institution, the potential for researcher bias in this study has been significant. Creswell (2009) identifies the clarification of researcher bias as a strategy to enhance validity. “This self-reflection creates an open and honest narrative that will resonate well with readers” (Creswell, 2009, p.192). There are many negative perceptions of Foundation phase teachers and I argue this based on my own personal experiences and observations. These negative perceptions include Foundation Phase teaching being seen as not as important or as challenging as teaching in the higher years. Having had experience teaching in the higher grades, prior to becoming a Foundation Phase teacher, I found Foundation Phase teaching to be extremely crucial to a learner’s progress at school. The dedication and hard work required by a Foundation Phase teacher is very often underestimated and I have witnessed situations where teachers in the higher grades often undermine Foundation Phase teachers by implying that teaching the content covered in the Foundation Phase is not as demanding as teaching the content covered in the higher grades. It is evident that I had my own beliefs about teaching in the Foundation Phase; however I tried my best to ensure that I did not enforce my own views about teaching in the Foundation Phase onto my participants during the interviewing process. I treated all participants as experts on the research topic and refrained from prompting them to respond in the way I wanted them to.

Lastly I have enhanced the validity of this study by providing a detailed description of the research process and outcomes which, according to Maykut and Morehouse (1994), provides readers with a foundation for judging the credibility of a study, as detailed information about purpose and method lays the research process open for readers, inviting their deliberation and scrutiny of the work. I will now go on to explain the ethical considerations that were taken in this study.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

This study was approved by the Ethics Committee of the University of KwaZulu-Natal and an ethical clearance certificate was issued (see Appendix 1). The key objective of ethics in research is to make sure that research is not performed for harmful or evil purposes and that no harm befalls anyone or any living thing during the research process (Wisker, 2009). Flick (2007) indicates that the consequences of an interview study need to be addressed pertaining to the risk

of harm to the participants as well as to the expected benefits of participating in the study. Furthermore individuals participating in a research study are entitled to expect that they will be made aware of the nature of the study and may choose whether or not to participate and will not be coerced into participating (Lichtman, 2010). I ensured that all participants in my study were aware of the nature and purpose of this study as well as what the research process entailed before I began data production. The participants were also assured that their participation in this study would not harm them in any way. Henning (2004) maintains that participants need to give informed consent to participate in a research study and the participant must give consent to the relevant ethical issues in a letter of consent which is pre-drafted by the researcher. Salkind (2012) describes informed consent as the process during which potential participants in a research study consent to a minimum set of standards that outlines an understanding of what the research is about, the role played by the participant, the potential risks and benefits of the research study, and the rights of the participants. Prior to conducting each interview consent to participate in the study was therefore obtained from each participant via a written letter of consent (see Appendix 2). Permission to record the interviews was also obtained from the participants. Individuals participating in a research study are entitled to expect that their privacy will be guaranteed and consequently no identifying information about the participants in any form should be revealed (Lichtman, 2010). The participants were therefore assured of the confidentiality of the information supplied by them. They were also informed that the recorded data would be stored in a safe place and would only be used by the researcher for research purposes. Furthermore pseudonyms were used in the study to protect the identities of the participants. Having discussed the ethical considerations in this study, I will lastly go on to describe how the data in this study was analysed during the data analysis process.

3.10 Data Analysis

Rubin and Rubin (2005, p.201) have defined data analysis in qualitative interviewing as “the process of moving from raw interviews to evidence-based interpretations that are the foundation for published reports”. They indicate that this analysis deals with categorizing, contrasting, evaluating and combining data from the interviews in order to obtain the meaning and

implications, to disclose patterns, or to put together descriptions of events into a consistent storyline (Rubin & Rubin, 2005).

“The challenging task of making sense out of a quickly accumulating pile of field notes, audio tapes, and documents is facilitated by the quick and efficient transfer of this raw data into clearly readable form for data analysis” (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994, p.127). Therefore the interview transcripts were efficiently transcribed verbatim so that the analysis process could begin. The transcription process according to Henning (2004) should commence as soon as possible and she advises that one should transcribe as much of the data as possible on one’s own. I transcribed the recorded data and read it several times in order to familiarise myself with the data and to gain a better understanding of the data that was produced. Henning (2004) has maintained that transcribing data yourself will allow the researcher to achieve a greater comprehension of what some of the possibly indistinct speech was about as well as what the tone of the participants voice may have implied (Henning, 2004). Thematic analysis was also used to form several categories or themes.

The information was analysed into themes using thematic content analysis. Flick (2007, p.105) defines content analysis as “a technique for a systematic quantitative description of the manifest content of communication”. He reveals that the coding of a text’s meaning into groupings will make it possible to calculate how frequently certain themes are dealt with in a text and the frequency of themes can then be contrasted and evaluated with other measures (Flick, 2007). In other words coding allows one to take steps towards arriving at conclusions (Bell, 2010). During this process of coding the interview transcripts into meaningful categories I opted to make use of what Lichtman (2010) has described as the six steps in the data analysis process:

Step 1: The initial coding
Here the researcher selects any transcript, reads the initial page or two and then inserts their initial codes. The researcher continues to read the transcript whilst entering different codes and when one transcript is completed another transcript is selected and the same process is continued.
Step 2: Revisiting of the initial coding

By this step the researcher will have accumulated a large number of codes. Some of these codes will be unnecessary and will need to be removed and some will need to be renamed. The codes can be modified according to what the researcher has already collected and new raw data.
<p>Step 3: The development of an initial list of categories or central ideas</p> <p>Once the researcher has completed the modification of the codes, the next step is to organize them into categories. In some cases certain codes may become major topics whilst others can be grouped under a major topic and become subsets of that topic.</p>
<p>Step 4: The modification of the initial list based on additional rereading</p> <p>In this step the iterative process will be continued and the researcher may conclude that some categories are less important than others or may realise that two categories can be combined.</p>
<p>Step 5: Revisiting of categories and subcategories</p> <p>In this step the researcher must revisit their category list and see if redundancies can be removed. The critical elements should also be identified during the revisiting of the categories. The researcher will also need to decide and exercise judgment on what is important and what is not.</p>
<p>Step 6: Moving from categories to concepts (themes)</p> <p>In the final step the researcher needs to identify key concepts that reflect the meaning attached to the collected data. Although there are no rules in terms of the number of concepts one can identify, it is recommended that the fewer well developed and supported concepts make for a much richer analysis than many loosely supported ideas.</p>

Table 4: Lichtmans six steps of data analysis (Lichtman, 2010, pp. 198-199)

The main themes and ideas were identified from the transcripts using Lichtman's (2010) six steps of data analysis. By using this process I was able to separate the themes that answered my research questions from those which did not. The findings of the study were thereafter compared and contrasted with findings from similar studies.

3.11 Conclusion

This chapter has explained in detail the process that was used to carry out this research study. In every step during this process the most appropriate research method was chosen in accordance to what would best suit the aims of the research study. It firstly entailed a discussion of the research approach and research paradigm which were used for this study. The sampling procedure, data

collection process and limitations of this study were then highlighted and discussed. In addition to this the steps taken to improve the validity and reliability of this study were discussed. This was followed by a description of the ethical considerations taken during the research process. A description and discussion of the data collection process were also provided. The detailed explanation of the research process presented in this chapter was done in order to provide the reader with a better understanding of the research study as well as to make the study more authentic in the eyes of the reader. Having discussed the research process carried out for this study, the next chapter goes on to analyse and discuss the data collected during the research process using thematic content analysis.

Chapter Four Data Analysis

4.1 Introduction

Rubin and Rubin (2005, p.201) define data analysis in qualitative interviewing as “the process of moving from raw interviews to evidence-based interpretations that are the foundation for published reports”. They indicate that this analysis deals with categorizing, contrasting, evaluating and combining data from the interviews in order to obtain the meaning and implications, to disclose patterns, or to put together descriptions of events into a consistent storyline (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). In this chapter the data from each of the interviews that had been conducted for this particular study will be presented and analysed. In order to ensure that the identities of the 15 male students who participated in this study remained confidential, their names were replaced with a pseudonym. Firstly the seven African students who participated will be referred to as Scelo, Thabiso, Senzo, Sbu, Mlungisi, Asibonge, and Manjimela. Secondly the four Indian participants will be referred to as Raj, Anand, Jayden and Kaylyn. Lastly the two coloured participants will be referred to as Joel and Leeshaun, alongside the two white participants who will be referred to as Simon and Mike. The major themes that emerged from the interviews are described below:

4.2 Teaching Foundation Phase – “a women’s job”

The majority of the students in this study believed that gender played a role in determining who would make a successful Foundation Phase teacher. Some felt that females possessed all the necessary qualities that were needed to work in the early years of teaching whilst males on the other hand possessed qualities that were not suitable. Thabiso maintains the following,

...most men don't have patience like women so they find it hard to handle small children even at home it is like always the mother who is gonna take charge when it comes to looking after the children, the father will just go work and when he comes home he doesn't concern himself with things like bathing the children and

things like that. I think men they don't like to work with young children because most of the time at home the mother is doing everything for the children

Senzo also asserts,

I think it's more suitable for females... They like babies, they like children, they the ones who give birth and they the ones who do lots of things compared to males. Men cannot look after a baby that's why women are good in Foundation Phase. Females they care, they love more than a male and they are good teachers and ya they are able to bond with babies and in the Foundation Phase you need a bond between the child and the teacher, the child must be able to communicate with the teacher, if the child doesn't understand something they must talk to the teacher so that's what in the Foundation Phase is required.

Here Thabiso and Senzo substantiate their claims that males would not be suitable to work with young children by indicating that there is a greater connection between females and children because at home it is the mother who usually does everything for the child. Drudy (2008) indicates that there has been an ideological connection between women's domestic responsibilities and their commitment to teaching, which suggests that females are more 'naturally' predisposed to roles of nurture than males. Thornton and Bricheno (2006) also reveal that many theorists believe that the domination of primary education by females is largely due to the fact that females have been socialized into teaching young children as a result of a strong association with homemaking responsibilities originating from influences adopted from society. Whilst revealing his reasons for not pursuing the Foundation Phase, Manjimela indicated the following:

As I've mentioned before I think teaching young children they are noisy like I mean you, one thing you teaching them let's say you have to look at the way they are interacting with each other like maybe they are playing I think it's more it has

to come with being a person a natural person that like children like women are able to do that; us males different story... When it comes to teaching besides the teaching if you can look in the past perspective teaching like especially for those for the young ones it is more like if you can like make a statistic to see how many how much what you call it daily care its mostly organized by females right ya so like in the early stages when there is, when the children are growing in the early stages we expect women to to be the ones who are like taking care of children. Once they grown maybe they in grade six that's where we come like, you know, we more comfortable with the adult because we think like they are more reasonable they know what they are doing more than the children.

Manjimelas' sentiments about males being better suited to teach a child who is older was similar to those found by Skelton (2003), where a male respondent had indicated that you do not usually find males in the lower years of schooling, for example nursery school; he indicated that this may have been the case because male mind-sets are better suited to teaching older children. Here we see the allusion to essentialist understandings of men and women who are assumed to be naturally predisposed to working with younger children. The expectations and assumptions are bound up with gender roles that associate men with older children in school and women with younger ones. By indicating that male teachers would only become involved in the children's learning when they are grown whereas prior to that females should form an integral part of the child's learning, we can clearly see how Manjimela associates men with older children whose cognitive skills are more developed and young children who still require more assistance and nurturing with women. Here is also the assumption that women are not equipped to manage or deal with older children who may challenge them intellectually while men are. A respondent in David's (1996) study also revealed how as a male kindergarten teacher he often had to deal with doubting parents who did not believe a man could be nurturing enough with their children. He also indicated how one couple had even told him that they hoped their son would be placed with

a woman as they felt he needed to be exposed to “that maternal instinct”. Many of the students in this study also made specific mention of how Foundation Phase teaching was regarded as more of a mothering and nurturing profession that was better suited towards females. Thabiso reveals the following when asked why males do not want to teach young children,

Most men they don't know how to take care of babies, in Foundation Phase you must treat the child like your own child and as you can see now most children don't live with their fathers they live with their mothers, I think that's the reason why and also when the father is there he usually leaves the mother to see to the child because he sees it as a mothering role that he can't do.

Here Thabiso notes the context in South Africa where most children do not live with both their parents, statistics have shown that only around a third of preschool children in South Africa reside in the same home as both their parents (Statistics South Africa, 2011). He further reveals how most children live with their mothers and not with their fathers. Richter et al. (2012) have also indicated that South Africa has one of the highest rates of father absence in the world. Thabiso's reasoning behind his belief that women are better suited to teach in the Foundation Phase is therefore the result of a situation at home where he indicates that mothers are usually the ones present in the lives of their children whereas fathers are not. Thabiso also identifies the Foundation Phase as an area of teaching where one must possess the ability to treat the child as your own. He makes a disassociation between men and childcare and hence positions them as unsuitable to teach in the Foundation Phase. Connell (1995) reveals that true masculinity is usually believed to extend from men's bodies and to be either natural in a male body or to communicate something concerning a male body. He argues that the body either steers or guides action (e.g. men are naturally more aggressive than women) or the body places restriction on action (e.g. men naturally do not take care of babies) (Connell, 1995). Hence by positioning males as unsuitable to teach in the early years by indicating that they are unable to take care of babies, Thabiso is referring to what Connell (1995) has labelled as the restrictions to action placed against one's masculinity. Scelo also disassociates men from childcare and reveals the following about men and women,

... Females they are able to handle their children, men they are unable to handle well their children and males they have little time to connect with their children and females have more time to connect with their children, I think that there are the most important qualities I can mention. You can't be able to connect with young children at school but at your home you have no time to connect with them, firstly you have to connect with your children at home and then that can make you able to connect with children.

Here Scelo identifies a situation where males have little time to connect with their children at home which makes them unsuitable to connect with young children at school. He explains why he has positioned males as having little time to connect with their children at home later during the interview by revealing the following,

... It is our belief as a man that we believe that we have to work hard to support our families to make our families succeed but people who are specifically who are enable to to being support to young children are women, are women. I think let me tell you a story (laughs) our our fathers, we see them twice per year two times per year chance to get and to combine as a family I think from June and December when they get leave at work and that makes us feel that people who are important to us are women's because every time anything that I need or want to get I tell my mum and my mum try to interact and solve my problem

Scelo now makes specific reference to the gendered nature of work by indicating that men must go and work to support their family whilst women should give support to young children. Pleck (1995) reveals that men experience their careers and themselves as meaningful only by means of priding themselves through the hard work and personal sacrifice they make as breadwinners in their families. The connecting of the breadwinner role to masculinity in this manner according to Pleck (1995) has a number of consequences for men. He argues that the husband's economic role

in the family has evolved so that now it is under control of forces completely outside the family (Pleck, 1995). The objective of this new male work role according to Pleck (1995) is to increase productivity by increasing men's commitment and loyalty to work and by lessening those relations to the family that might compete with it.

Pleck (1995) indicates that men's responsibilities in the family have lessened to accommodate greater performance in the workplace and the dehumanization of work suggests that the satisfaction which jobs provide for men is increasingly limited to accomplishing the breadwinner role. This is largely because on one hand, men's relations to the family must be broken down in order to facilitate industrial work discipline, whilst on the other hand, men's sense of responsibility to the family must be increased, but it is moulded into a purely economic form in order to impart the motivation for men to work at all (Pleck, 1995). This male work role is highlighted by Scelo, who makes specific mention of how mothers care for and are the support for children whereas the relationship between father and the family is lessened because he goes out to work and comes home once or twice per year. Scelo also indicates that because they would only see their fathers twice a year, this has made women more important in their lives, as they could always rely on their mothers in problematic situations and in times of need. Some of the participants in the study conducted by Spjeldnaes, Moland, Harris and Sam (2011) similarly make reference to growing up in women-centred households and having labour-migrant fathers who return home from two to six times a year. Scelo also asserts that whenever he had a problem he would go and interact with his mother as opposed to his father, and she was always there for him and would help him solve his problem. This situation where Scelo would go to his mother for assistance as opposed to his father can be assumed to be the direct result of his father's absence at home. Bernard (1995) has also argued that, when the division of labour removes the man from the family home for most of the day, then intimate relationships become less realistic. The hope of such an intimate relationship between Scelo and his father becomes even less feasible as his father only returns to their family home twice a year. Scelo therefore uses this situation where the father is away working whilst the mother is at home caring for the children as a rationale to explain why women are better suited to teach young children in the early years of schooling. Simon also disassociates males from Foundation Phase teaching by revealing the following,

Honestly I dunno I think it's just a general, uhmm, at that phase it's more like mothering phase so that's why males don't really get into it, cause it's not our habit to mother someone that's what happens in those ages.

Here Simon likens Foundation Phase teaching to a mothering phase. He reveals that this impression of Foundation Phase teaching leads to a situation where males do not generally pursue teaching in the Foundation Phase as they do not have the tendency to mother someone. He also places an emphasis on the age of children in the Foundation Phase and indicates that this would place these children in a position to be mothered. Joel agreed with Simon on this issue and indicates that learners in the Foundation Phase are at an age where they need to be mothered,

It's just that at that age they need errr, you know the motherly love and that caring attitude to push them kind of through.

It is interesting to note that Joel mentions that motherly love is needed in the Foundation Phase; by doing so he places emphasis on a mother's (females) ability to love and care and ignores the ability of a father (male) to do the same. Here both Simon and Joel refer to the division of labour by sex which is significant of the work group becoming the sex group (Bernard, 1995). Bernard (1995) argues that the very nature of maleness and femaleness becomes entrenched in the sexual division of labour, where one's work defines one's gender. Simon and Joel emphasise that it is a female's job to essentially be involved in childcare which emphasises the division of labour according to one's sex. Leeshaun also agrees with the other male students regarding a need for children to be mothered in the Foundation Phase. In addition to this he also identifies how the stereotype of women being more nurturing could be the reason why many men do not go into Foundation Phase teaching. Leeshaun asserts,

Uhhh I'm not quite sure but I think one the issues it could be err that maybe this might be a stereotype as well that oh errr females are more prone to to, they are more prone to to to roles of nurture much more than males, you, they they much better at nurturing kids from a very young age and developing them into into into not better human beings to say but into sort of like mothering them.

Leeshaun reveals how it is believed that females are more inclined to roles of nurture than males. In line with Leeshaun's indication of a belief that women are more nurturing than men, Drudy (2008) has argued that there has been ideological connection involving women's domestic responsibilities and their obligation to teaching, which suggests that females are more 'naturally' predisposed to roles of nurture than males. The stereotype that females are better at nurturing and mothering young children than men according to Leeshaun is one of the reasons why men do not go into Foundation Phase teaching. Koutrous (2010) agrees with Leeshaun's reasoning and he also argues that the classification of the ability to teach as "women's work" and the inability of male teachers to adapt into the "mothering role" has held many aback. A study carried out by Drudy (2008) has also discovered there has been a strongly perceived association among respondents between the nurturing role of women and their assumed higher responsibility for teaching very young learners in several Western societies.

By positioning the Foundation Phase as a suitable site for mothering, Thabiso, Simon and Leeshaun are reinforcing gender roles where men are seen to be incompatible with children based on some inherent quality that women are expected to have. Adams and Coltrane (2005, p.241) argue that such perceptions may exist because "we raise boys to expect mothers to wait on them and nurture them, and we raise girls to help their mothers perform the endless family work that is necessary for maintain homes and raising children" The students therefore hold on to essentialist biological understandings of gender. The revelations made by these students are consistent with the findings of Sargent (2005) who also found that the image of teaching and childcare as 'women's work' is strongly supported by making use of the terms 'mother' and 'mothering' as metaphors for positions held within early childhood education. A respondent in

his study revealed that it is obvious that most people regard childcare as an extension of the home and of motherhood (Sargent, 2005). The respondent further argued that people probably possessed similar sentiments with regards to the early years of teaching and he believed that this played a role in making men seem out of place in early childhood education (Sargent, 2005). Scelo mentions the following whilst expressing why he believes males should not teach in the Foundation Phase:

(Laughs) Aiyh I think because we as males are good to teach older ones because they need more knowledge than the young ones, they young ones need more love and care and a man can't afford to teach young children and people who supposed to work with children are women.

By indicating that males should teach older learners because they need more knowledge than younger learners, Scelo is making the assumption that 'genuine' learning is associated with males in the higher grades whilst females are associated with the provision of love and care in the early years. Scelo's sentiments are in line with a respondent from Sargent's (2005) study who also revealed a general attitude that teaching young children is something you need a woman for and that these young children need mothering and nurturing more than they need education. A respondent in Skelton's (2003) study further revealed that male attitudes were better suited towards older children. Another respondent in her study also asserted that female teachers can expect less from younger children with regards to their academic work and they at times place greater emphasis on mothering skills whilst male teachers on the other hand have a greater interest in the genuine learning taking place with regards to academic work (Skelton, 2003). Scelo also indicates that a man cannot 'afford to teach young children'; thereby implying that as a man you would not be able to teach young children without a serious consequence. He goes on to add that the people who should work with children are women. Hence the serious consequence of a man teaching young children that Scelo is referring to is the consequence of a man working in a woman's area of work. Mike also made specific mention of how caring was associated with

women and because young children need love and care, the teaching of young children is regarded as a women's job:

Uhhh possibly I think err that stereotype a man is being strong and dominant or whatever uhhh sometimes you find that a male is too loving and caring uhhh passionate about ya and society might say that they doing a women's job maybe but it shouldn't be like that.

Here again we see how Mike also holds on to essentialist biological understandings of what it means to be a man or woman. He identifies the stereotype of a man as strong and dominant and divergence from this role to by being too loving and caring, the common qualities associated with a Foundation Phase teacher, will possibly result in a situation where society will identify such males as doing a woman's job. Carrington and McPhee (2008) also indicate that working with young children is frequently linked with nurturing and possessing a caring persona. Engagement in caring practices according to Morrell and Jewkes (2011) has previously been understood as the territory of women. The teaching of young children, because of its association with childcare, is therefore often regarded as a caring profession and thus 'women's' work. Furthermore in constructions of masculinity if the definition of caring goes further than provision and protection and goes on to include hands-on attending to the sick, aged, young and to engage emotionally with those being provided with care, then its position in the collection of principles that construct masculine identity changes (Morrell & Jewkes, 2011). Morrell and Jewkes (2011) have also revealed that in South Africa men who assume care work out of duty are perhaps a minority whereas the majority of men have chosen to avoid care work completely and take their family responsibilities lightly.

4.3 “We as men don’t have patience”

Some of the students also felt that many males do not pursue teaching in the Foundation Phase because they do not have the patience that women have to handle young children. Thabiso maintains that,

“In Foundation Phase the teacher must have, must be patient in order to qualify for that phase and mostly mens are not that patient, they can’t handle small children.”

Thabiso identifies patience as a prerequisite to be able to teach in the Foundation Phase. He indicates that most men however do not have patience or the ability to handle young children. Thabiso’s comments suggest that he believes that most men would therefore be unsuitable to teach in the Foundation Phase due to their lack of patience and inability to handle young children. When asked if he would consider teaching in the Foundation Phase if it was not a feminized area of teaching Anand similarly revealed the following,

Well I don’t think so because, err, I feel that the small kids are too much to handle and I don’t think I have you know the patience and and, err, how can I say it, patience and character you know to actually handle them at that age so that is why I you know I tended to do the high school part.

Anand, like Thabiso, also identifies patience as an important requirement to teach in the Foundation Phase and he reveals that he does not possess this patience to handle children at that age, which influenced his decision to go into high school teaching instead. Both Thabiso and Anand make use of biological driven arguments that supposedly separate genders. They do this by indicating that men naturally (i.e. they were born without patience) do not have patience whereas women do. Jordan-Young (2010) similarly argues that even though popular scientific usage of the term sex differences often refers to psychology and behaviour, there is often an implicit or potential physiological claim involved, as with the idea that behaviours are a direct indication of brain structure or function. She also argues that people possess predispositions of many kinds and who we end up becoming is not merely a reflection of what was exposed to us by our parents and cultures (Jordan-Young, 2010). She further argues that the natural attitude

encourages us to see gender at its most fundamental and obvious way to divide, which includes stimulating physical differences that perhaps include average differences in the brain (Jordan-Young, 2010). The sentiments expressed by both Thabiso and Anand were also similar to the findings in a study done by Drudy, Martin, Woods, and O'Flynn (2005) in which they investigated school leavers and student teachers explanation for the fall of male teachers. One of the frequent explanations offered by school leavers was that primary teaching required too much patience (Drudy et al., 2005). Some of the male students also identified patience as being a 'natural' feature of women and therefore men were not suitable to teach in the Foundation Phase, as it was understood to be an area of teaching which requires a lot of patience. Joel declares that,

Men don't have patience (laughs), I mean they don't have that caring with small children they don't find the time to be hands on with them you know like how women are... I just don't have the patience and me and small little children just don't go hand in hand and I'm not going to be babying children, I'm just not I don't have the passion for all of that.

Here Joel emphasizes his male power by disassociating himself from caring for young children. He indicates how men do not have the time to be caring or to be hands on with children. By indicating that men 'don't have the time' to be caring and hands on with children, Joel is minimizing the importance of such activities. Furthermore by associating these activities with women Joel is also devaluing these activities as women's work. Hence Joel is emphasizing his masculine power by distancing himself from what he regards as unimportant, women's work.

Jayden similarly reveals,

"Err I don't think that I mean, uhmm, what can I say like uhmm, like I wanted to, I don't think the Foundation Phase is suitable because uhmm honestly, I think it's more for female teachers because they have the patience, they like have that motherly uhmm, instinct".

Jayden in this instance positions Foundation Phase as more suitable for women because they possess the necessary patience and motherly instinct which he believes are the necessary qualities one must retain in order to teach in this phase. By indicating that females would automatically possess the qualities suited to teach in the Foundation Phase, Jayden is in turn positioning Foundation Phase teaching as a job that would come naturally to a female and would therefore be unsuitable for a male.

There is a correlation between what Drudy et al., (2005) found and what the respondents in this study have said about how women are more suited than men to teaching young children as they possess the necessary qualities required to teach in this phase. Drudy et al. (2005) reveal that a respondent in their study indicated that primary teaching was too stressful and men are not caring enough because they do not possess the natural caring aptitude that women possess. They further reveal their observation of an essentialist view that women are naturally better with children, and this was more common amongst the male respondents than female respondents (Drudy et al., 2005). This view was at times tied to the view that men were 'naturally' lacking patience (Drudy et al., 2005). A study conducted by Sargent (2004) on men who worked in early childhood education also found that there was uncertainty surrounding the issue of whether men are psychologically or emotionally equipped to spend extended hours around children. They reveal that persistent myths dealing with men's shortage of patience and their incapacity to be child-centred has contributed to the belief that men are not suitable to work in the early years of teaching (Sargent, 2004). A female staff member in a university of education in Sargent's (2004) study also mentioned that male students were often asked how they would be capable of handling a room filled with children. She believed that this occurrence was a result of the common view that men do not possess the patience that women do and she also maintained that such a question is never posed to women in the early education class even though many of them may have never cared for children (Sargent, 2004). Whilst expressing how men lacked the necessary patience to teach in the Foundation Phase, some of the male students expressed a view that as men they would become easily frustrated and irritated with teaching in the Foundation Phase. Senzo asserts,

We as men don't have patience, even if I am at the class I get irritated easily than like a woman female teacher would do and I won't have the time to say "shuuuuuurup grade ones" (Senzo imitates in a feminine voice), you know I will Never! Do that Never! Never Ever! (laughs).

It is interesting to note that whilst describing teaching in the Foundation Phase Senzo synonymously identifies it with a female teacher. He emphasises his masculinity by indicating that he would “*Never! Do that Never! Never Ever!*” Masculinity according to Kaufman (1995, p.16) “is a reaction against passivity and powerlessness, and with it comes a repression of a vast range of human desires and possibilities: those that are associated with femininity.” Here Senzo’s words indicate that in order for him to establish his power and give sense to his masculinity, he must therefore react against teaching in the early years of schooling because of its association with femininity. He also in the process devalues the status of teaching in the early years by indicating he does not have the time to engage with grade one learners.

Leeshaun also asserts,

I think as males in general we lack a certain degree of patience because I think in the Foundation Phase what really, really, is required for a teacher in the Foundation Phase is patience and also dealing with people that you not sure of understanding what is required of them also tends to frustrate men more than females and children relate more to women than men.

Here Leeshaun states that men do not understand what is required of them, as if they are hard wired not to have patience. The views expressed by these male students were similar to the findings in a study conducted by Drudy et al. (2005) where a respondent had indicated that young children would wreck your head and some men do not have the patience for this.

4.4 Foundation Phase as a feminized area of teaching: “I didn’t see any males there so as a male I didn’t even think about going there”

The engagement in caring practices, according to Morrell and Jewkes (2011), has previously been understood as the territory of women. The teaching of young children, because of its association with childcare, is therefore often regarded as a caring profession and thus ‘women’s’ work. Furthermore in constructions of masculinity if the definition of caring goes further than provision and protection and goes on to include hands-on attending to the sick, aged, young and engaging emotionally with those being provided with care, then its position in the collection of principles that construct masculine identity changes (Morrell & Jewkes, 2011). Morrell and Jewkes (2011) have also revealed that in South Africa men who assume care work out of duty were perhaps a minority whereas the majority of men have chosen to avoid care work completely and take their family responsibilities lightly.

Griffiths (2006) states that there are diverse as well as contending definitions of feminization, as referring to either the number (absolute or proportional) of women in teaching or to a way of life linked with women. The feminization of teaching particularly in the early years results in it being characterized as a female territory, not just by society at large, but also by potential teacher recruits and current teachers (Carrington & Mcphee, 2008). Smedley (2007) further indicates that not many men choose to become primary school teachers and those who make this choice shift into a world regarded as feminized and compete with a publicly-voiced expression which concurrently idealizes and demonizes them. Most of the students in this study, confirmed that in their primary school teachers in the Foundation Phase were predominantly female and in some cases this phase was taught exclusively by female teachers. Some even indicated that because they had not seen a male teacher in the Foundation Phase, this had played a role in influencing their decision to not specialise in the Foundation Phase. Sbu declared the following when asked whether the absence of male teachers in the Foundation Phase had determined his decision to not specialise in the Foundation Phase:

You know that when you are a male teacher you always believe that to take of young children is only, meant for women, I look up from them and I repeated their style.

Here Sbu indicates that because they as males have been taught by women in the Foundation Phase, they now want to reproduce that by distancing themselves from this area of teaching. Senzo and Asibonge expressed similar outlooks when asked the same question:

Senzo: Yes it did because I didn't see any males there, so as a male I didn't even think about going there.

Asibonge: Ya it did ,because as I was there in primary school I saw that, ohhh, the male teachers don't specialise in the Foundation Phase.

Here, by listening to how Sbu, Senzo and Asibonge recall their own experiences of being learners in a feminized environment, we see how the constructions of masculinity are made much earlier on in life. Connell (1995) also affirms that masculinity is not merely an idea in the head or a personal identity, but it is also extended to the world and fused in organized social relations. Adams and Coltrane (2005, p.231) further indicate that “treating masculinity as socially constructed leads us to focus on the social conditions that promote different versions of it, as well as implying that change in masculinity is possible and desirable”. The sentiments expressed by these students are consistent with the findings by Carrington (2002) who found that the image of teaching as a feminized occupation, particularly in the early years, has persisted to operate as a major constriction upon male enrolment in this area of schooling. A male respondent in the study conducted by Johnston et al. (1999) also acknowledged that there is a risk of women are being stereotyped into the primary school role which is having a consequential effect on people who are pursuing teaching. The respondent further indicated that this is not implanted in the male psyche, but rather something that he has become accustomed to with all these years (Johnston et al., 1999). Thabiso also asserts,

Ok, in most primary schools female teachers are dominant in the ECD (early childhood education) and Foundation Phase so I think the society won't

appreciate men here... Because they are used that there are women. I haven't experienced that thing but they won't approve them because they used to a certain gender and if they see a male there they will be worried, like, what's going on because they are so used to seeing females teaching there

It is evident from Thabiso's response that the construction of teaching in the early years as a feminised domain has been socially constructed. He argues that society will not appreciate men in this area of teaching because they are already accustomed to having female teachers there. The sentiments expressed by Thabiso were consistent to the findings in a study carried out by Carrington (2002) where a male respondent had also indicated that many of his friends would not approve of a teaching career in a primary school because 'it's all women'. Another respondent in his study further argued that males often lack the confidence to work in the lower primary division in schools because of its reputation of being a female territory and if you happen to be male, then secondary teaching is more appropriate (Carrington, 2002). A respondent in the study carried out by Gosse, Parr and Allison (2008) also mentioned that teaching is regarded as a female profession, especially in the early years, and primary teaching was an odd profession for a man to be in. In the same way Thabiso has indicated how society will wonder what is going on if they were to see a man in the Foundation Phase because it is unusual for a man to be in a position that is generally occupied by a female.

The students here have justified their decision to not enter the early years of teaching by positioning it as a feminized area of teaching unsuitable for male teachers. By doing so they have shown how their views are views of wider masculine and gendered positions where teaching in the early years is regarded as women's work.

4.5 A negative portrayal of males who pursue Foundation Phase teaching: “to be on ECD or Foundation Phase is just not ayoba (expression of delight, excitement, agreement and approval)”

Many of the students in this study often made mention of how males who pursue Foundation Phase teaching would be portrayed in a negative light. Some felt that if a male had to go into the early years of teaching then he would be belittled by others as they would identify such a male as being weak and scared to teach older learners. Sbu reveals the following whilst unfolding some of the reasons why males do not pursue the early years of teaching,

...what I can say is that eh hh you know what is happening here they start asking each other which phase are you in going to teach, and those who are going to teach or those who are taking senior FET they gonna look at you and say ay this guy you are weak, some guys who do take Foundation Phase... Because maybe you scared to teach older ones.

Jayden similarly reveals the following whilst describing how his friends would have reacted had he decided to pursue the early years of teaching:

Err, they would have said ‘ohhh you gonna go teach the young ones, what’s wrong with you, can’t you handle the big ones, what, you scared of them?’ Things like that.

Here Sbu and Jayden mention how teaching or not teaching in the early years is regulated by others. They maintain how one’s masculinity would be called into question for having chosen to teach in the early years. In these two instances Sbu and Jayden relate the masculinity of teaching to power and courage by stating how a decision to go into the early years of teaching would imply that you are scared of and unable to handle older learners. Williams (1995b) also argues that males who select female occupations are frequently deemed to be ‘failures’ or sexual deviants. By looking at the comments made by Sbu and Jayden it is clear that they too consider men who enter female professions as failures. These stereotypes, according to Williams (1995b),

may present themselves as a major impediment to men who may want to consider a career in these female professions. They can also be expected to be decisive factors when a member of a relatively high status group crosses into a lower status profession; within the context of this study this would refer to a male going into the early years of teaching (Williams, 1995b). Williams (1995b) however argues that the degree to which these stereotypes add to the 'glass escalator effect' by directing men into more justifiable and higher paying professions, then they are not unfair. Studies carried out by Simpson (2004) and Johnston et al. (1999) similarly found people would often put down males who teach in the early years. A male primary school teacher in Simpson's (2004) study mentioned how he had been characterised as a wimp after revealing his profession as a male teacher in a primary school. A male trainee in the study carried out by Johnston et al. (1999) also revealed that there are always scornful comments that you are doing a woman's course and for the period of Christmas friends would jokingly inquire how they are managing with the 'wee kiddies' and he did feel looked down upon. Gosse et al. (2008) also found that a respondent in their study had indicated that primary teaching is regarded as a 'sissy job' and effeminate. Cameron (2001) further argues that the doubts regarding men's motives for following a career in the early years of schooling brings about a questioning of their masculinity. She reveals that male employee's masculinity is interpreted according to major ideas and assumptions with regards to gender appropriate caring (Cameron, 2001). The contravention of these gender restrictions according to Cameron (2001) creates a temptation to cast uncertainty on the individual gender identity and even the integrity of the individual. In this study, by positioning males who pursue Foundation Phase teaching as weak and scared, both Sbu and Jayden are similarly also casting uncertainty on the integrity of such individuals. Senzo also reveals the following when asked how his friends would have reacted had he pursued Foundation Phase teaching,

...maybe I would be friendless... I would not have these kinds of friends that I have now because they would be like 'you on Foundation Phase? Waaah come on!'...The kind of attitude they would have towards me it's like you have this feminine thing going on because you on ECD or Foundation Phase. I'm not

saying they are females or something but to be on ECD or Foundation Phase is just not ayoba (expression of delight, excitement, agreement and approval).

Senzo clearly perceives teaching in the early years as a feminine environment which one should not enter as a male. He indicates how a decision to enter the early years of teaching would place him in a position where he would be friendless; mentioning that he would be friendless gives us a clear indication of how he would be excluded by his friends as a result of such a decision. He recognizes his friend's displays of negative attitudes towards him would be as a direct result of them portraying him as being feminine for wanting to teaching in the early years of schooling. Essentially they would regard this act as a threat to his masculinity and consequently exclude him based on this. Here we see how the associations between the different categories of masculinity have come into play (Connell, 1995). Connell (1995) indicates that it is important that we be acquainted with the associations between the different kinds of masculinity which include associations dealing with reliance, dominance and subordination. He argued that these associations are formed via practices that include and exclude, that intimidate, exploit and so forth (Connell, 1995). By observing Senzo's comments above we can see clearly how male dominance as indicated by Connell (1995) is being asserted not only by distancing males from this feminine area of teaching but as well as by choosing to exclude any male who may want to enter the early years of teaching.

Thabiso further mentions the following when asked the same question,

They were going to laugh at me... I can say it is peer pressure because if somebody ask me what phase I'm doing I'd say FET if he or she says Foundation at my age ,they would just laugh at me I don't know why

Here Thabiso notes how teaching in the early years will result in a mockery of his masculinity. According to Connell (1995) in the midst of an increasing identification of the relationship between gender, race and class it has become normal to distinguish multiple masculinities. He identifies four relations among masculinities i.e. Hegemony, Subordination, Complicity and

Marginalization (Connell, 1995). Hegemonic masculinity is regarded as the arrangement of gender practice which denotes the presently accepted solution to the problem of the authenticity of patriarchy, which guarantees (or is assumed to guarantee) the dominance of men and the subordination of women (Connell, 1995). The remaining three relations among masculinities are non-hegemonic masculinities which emphasizes a move away from power (Bhana, 2002). Subordinate masculinities are demonstrated by men whose performance threatens the authenticity of hegemonic masculinities, for example homosexual men (Connell, 1995). It is safe to say that Thabiso's revelations that he would be laughed at for choosing to pursue the early years of teaching is indicative of a subordinated kind of masculinity. Connell (1995) argues that some heterosexual men and boys are also barred from the faction of legitimacy and this is manifested by rich expressions of abuse. This is noted by Thabiso who indicates that choosing to teach in the early years of schooling as a heterosexual male, you would in turn be opening yourself up to ridicule from one's peers. The findings of this study were consistent to that of the study conducted by Johnston et al. (1999) who mention how perceptions concerning the sex stereotyping of primary teaching results in a situation in which those males who choose primary teaching end up getting a negative reaction from their peers. A respondent in Simpson's (2005, p.372) study also revealed that "People laugh and say, 'He's a primary school teacher', and it does get into you, so I suppose that does affect how you deal with other people and who you mix with." Another respondent in her study revealed "Because I am a man in early years I'm aware that I am a freak and that I'm weird and in the wrong job" (Simpson, 2005, p.373). Raj also asserts that he would have been treated as a joke by his friends and would have appeared 'cute' to them had he gone into Foundation Phase teaching,

..It would have been kind of like a joke... It would have been kinda funny actually saying that I'm a grade 1 teacher, I would have looked cute to them.

Here Raj emphasizes his masculine power by indicating how he would not be taken seriously if he were a teacher in the early years. He further emphasizes his masculine power by indicating that it would be odd for him as a male to portray himself as a grade one teacher. Connell (1995, p.241) reveals that "men's interest in patriarchy is condensed in hegemonic masculinity and is defended by all the cultural machinery that exalts hegemonic masculinity". He goes on to argue

that it is institutionalized in the state and implemented by violence, intimidation and scorn within the lives of straight men (Connell, 1995). Raj shows clearly how patriarchy is being defended by the ridiculing of a decision to be a teacher of grade one learners in this instance. Here being a grade one teacher and teaching in the early years of schooling is considered a threat to hegemonic masculinity, which in turn weakens the system of patriarchy. Weaver-Hightower (2011) similarly found how discouragement from peers, family, and teacher education faced by three male student teachers in his study had included gendered teasing about the “cuteness” required in education coursework. He reveals how two student teachers who were majoring in the early years of teaching had reacted powerfully to the aspects in their teacher education programme that were characterized as feminine (Weaver-Hightower, 2011). Weaver-Hightower (2011) indicates that one representation of this femininity is that they be ‘cute’ and decorative in the work done for their classes. One of the male respondents in his study indicated that especially when dealing with younger learners the teacher needs to be cuter and colourful and put rainbows on names tags and so on, and he felt females would be better suited to those learners (Weaver-Hightower, 2011). Consequently the respondent expressed how the expectation of being ‘cute’ had severed as a deterrent for his teaching kindergarten or first grade, the level he intended to teach upon entering college (Weaver-Hightower, 2011).

4.6 Disassociation from the Foundation Phase is a confirmation of and instantiation of masculine power: “As a guy you should step up and teach a higher grade”

Anand in this study felt he would not be man enough if he entered the early years of teaching:

...if I go and I teach you know in Foundation Phase I'll get the feeling of not being man enough and errr, errr, you know, you know I won't possess that masculinity you know because like you know like according to society you know females are you know are mostly in the Foundation Phase, so errr ya you know I'll be perceived as weak I'll be perceived as you know as not being man enough.

In this instance Anand positions himself as not being man enough if he were to go into the early years of teaching. He asserts his male power by arguing that a decision to enter the female-dominated early years of teaching would in turn position him as weak and not man enough. Anand consequently discredits the early years of teaching by characterizing it as a weak feminine area of teaching inappropriate for real men. By doing so he is asserting his male dominance over women and reinforcing patriarchal ideas which indicate that men are the most powerful members in society.

Skelton (2003) has similarly indicated how respondents in her study made reference to the thought that working with young children is not proper teaching due to its connection with child care and is consequently not a suitable job for 'real men'. In addition to this Jayden expresses the following opinion of males, who do choose to go into the early years of teaching,

Err well, I've got a couple of friends that do specialise in the Foundation Phase, uhmm I really don't think much of it but errr ya I feel that you know as a guy you should step up and teach a higher grade.

Here Jayden mentions that he has friends who are pursuing the early years of teaching. By doing so he contradicts all the previous comments made by the participants in this study about how females on the contrary to men are 'naturally' suited to teach in the early years. Consequently these essentialist gender theories which indicate that women are more naturally suited to teach in the early years break down and do not hold when men actually do go into the early years of teaching. However they are disparaged and regulated by the scorn shown by others towards men who teach in the early years. This is clearly shown by Jayden whose choice of words implies that males should better themselves by teaching in a higher grade, as he indicates they should 'step up'. In this context 'step up' as opposed to step down, is indicative of power. It is also evident that Jayden has a low opinion of teaching in the early years. He shows this by making special mention of how as a 'guy' one should step up and teach a higher grade. In the process of doing so he in turn devalues the early years of teaching by characterizing as a low level job for a male.

Jayden's comments speak of an inferior subordinated masculinity which characterizes men who teach in the early years as soft and weak. Williams (1995b) argues that on the contrary to women who enter conventionally male occupations, men's movement into traditionally female occupations are regarded by the general public as a step down in status. This kind of discrimination according to Williams (1995b) may be the reason why males are under-represented in these occupations. She further argues that men who might have shown an interest in and skills for such careers are likely to be dissuaded from them as a result of the popular pessimistic stereotypes associated with males who work in those careers (Williams, 1995b). She lastly reveals that there exists a fundamental difference in the experience of females in non-traditional professions for example "My daughter the physician", would resonate much more favourably in most people's ears, as opposed to "My son, the nurse." (Williams, 1995b). Foster and Newman (2005) similarly reveal how males who decide to do 'women's work' and cross the threshold of feminine culture often initially deal with a series of stereotyped responses to their career choice. They reveal how when a male respondent in their study had announced his decision to go into primary teaching to a mother of a friend who was herself a primary teacher, her response was, "I am sure you can do something better than that". In the same way Jayden in this study has also indicated that males who decide to pursue Foundation Phase teaching could do better by instead teaching in the higher years. Gosse et al. (2008) also indicates that a respondent in their study revealed that primary teaching did not have a macho profile and was not seen as a high achieving or competitive career. In the same way Jayden may also be expressing his own view that teaching in the higher years is a higher achieving career as he indicates that males should step up and teach a higher grade. In her study on male pre-service teachers in the early years Jones (2007) indicated that her participants were aware that it was not acceptable for a man to work with young children and it was regarded as a soft option. This finding is consistent with Jayden's belief who, by indicating that males should instead step up and teach the higher years, also implies that males who choose to work in the Foundation Phase take an easy way out which establishes a threat to their masculinity. This 'soft work' according to Jones (2007) was not in line with the 'harder' more 'macho' kinds of work. Mills et al. (2004) have argued that one of the ways used to keep men out of teaching is assisted by constructing men who aspire to teach as aspiring to be like women and therefore abnormal men. "This is less so in relation to high school teaching within the masculinised domains, such as science,

mathematics, manual arts and physical education, but particularly so in relation to teaching in the early years of school” (Mills et al., 2004, p.358). A male primary teacher respondent in Carrington’s (2002) study also revealed that most of the men that he knew had preferred to go into secondary teaching because if you were male and wanted to be a teacher then secondary teaching was more acceptable. He attributed this to something in society which has developed and can be traced back to Victorian times when primary school teachers were spinsters who assumed a caring disposition, and when children got old enough to venture on to secondary school, people just assumed that was a more male appropriate area (Carrington, 2002). Consequently, by stating that males should step up and teach a higher grade, Jayden is complying with the idea that males would be better suited to teach in a high school instead in the early years of schooling. Senzo also asserts that males would be better suited to teach in the higher years,

As I’ve just said like ECD Foundation Phase is being regarded as a feminine position as a male you have to be in the FET phase and if you are in the ECD/Foundation Phase you will be like a coward. You are scared of the big boys that are there in the high school because in the high school level, because in the high school level more male teachers are needed, because Aihh these kids of today they are trouble, ya.

Here Senzo positions the early years of teaching as a feminine domain. He makes specific mention of how a male who enters this feminized area of teaching will be labelled as a coward. Senzo also points out that at a high school level more male teachers are needed because of troublesome learners. He identifies high school teaching as a male domain and associates high school with trouble and as something which only men can handle. By doing so Senzo is disempowering women as he indicates that more men as opposed to women are needed in high schools to deal with troublesome learners.

The statements made by both Jayden and Senzo about males being better suited towards teaching in the higher years are consistent with the findings in a study conducted by Cushman (2005) who

found that a number of his male participants had indicated that their choice to go into primary teaching induced a response that they would be better off going into high school teaching. Cushman (2005) indicates that the apparently higher status of secondary teachers directed one participant to consciously lie to his friends, by telling them he was going into secondary teaching. One of the visible explanations for the attachment of an elevated status to secondary teaching is that it is believed to call for a higher level of intellectual ability (Cushman, 2005). Many of the students in this study also felt that teaching in the Foundation Phase was regarded as not as challenging and intellectually demanding as was teaching in the higher years:

Asibonge: Ya if you are teaching in the Foundation Phase you are not regarded as a strong teacher who has a higher ability; if you are a male, if you are a male, they say you must go to the senior/FET phase so that you can deal with challenges, because they think there are no challenges in the Foundation Phase but there are challenges.

Leeshaun: I think it's intellectual reasons they feel that they are dealing with much more intellectual things than the, than in the Foundation Phase it's less more intellectual and it's not as demanding as senior phase.

Mike: I think that I, uhmm, it happens but I don't think it should happen, uhmm I think people just expect more from a high school teacher but uhmm they think that a high school teacher is probably more uhmm intellectual but uhmm or cleverer but it shouldn't be the case...

In the above comments Asibonge argues that as a male you would not be taken seriously if you go into the early years of teaching because it is seen as not challenging enough for a male as opposed to teaching in the higher years. By positioning teaching of the early years as an area of

work that would be regarded as not challenging enough for a male in particular, Asibonge consequently shows how the status of females ends up being devalued. This is because he makes no mention of teaching of the early years as being not challenging enough for a female, suggesting that females do not have the capacity to deal with the challenges and higher teaching ability required for the higher years. Leeshawn and Mike then go on to position the early years of teaching as not being intellectually demanding enough as compared to teaching in the higher years. Here the male students establish their male power by associating masculinity with intellectual strength. Johnston et al., (1999) similarly argue that it is likely that primary school teaching is therefore considered as 'low level' work, deficient in intellectual demands, and because intellectual power is powerfully linked with masculinity, males might consequently avoid this 'low level' work in favour of more 'meaningful' professions. This reveals that the conventional relationship between masculinity and the greater extent of intellectual control and access to power it permits continues and may be another fundamental element of the explanation as to why primary teacher trainees are predominantly females (Johnston et al. 1999). Connell (1995) reveals how the origins of masculinity concentrating on the idea of the male sex role goes back to the late 19th Century disputes about sex difference, when opposition to women's liberation was reinforced by a scientific belief of innate sex difference. He argues that the omission of females from universities for example were justified by claims that the feminine psyche was far too delicately composed to deal with the harshness of academic work (Connell, 1995). In this study Kaylyn went on to devalue the status of the early years of teaching by comparing it to child's play,

*... I've also heard that when you teach in the primary school its child's play
whereas the real thing is teaching in a high school.*

By positioning primary school teaching as child's play Kaylyn is attaching a low status to this area of teaching. At the same time by indicating that teaching in a high school is the 'real thing', he attaches a higher status to high school teaching. Johnston et al. (1999) similarly found that there is a perception that educating young children is an addition to mothering and that significant learning would only begin later at secondary phase. Sbu maintains the following

when asked if he believed teaching in the early years was seen as a low status profession in comparison to teaching in the higher years:

Ahhh I can say, ya, it is having a low status because it is seen a woman's job and if a man is going to take it they gonna say you are weak.

Here Sbu implies that the reason for teaching in the early years being regarded as a low status profession is because it is a 'woman's job'. He also indicates how as a man you would be characterized as weak by doing this 'woman's job'. Haywood and Mac an Ghaill (1996) also reveal how signs of weakness in many public spaces are associated with femininity. They argue that an essential feature of masculinities in the workplace is competence whereas incompetence on the other hand is deemed as failure, weakness or womanly (Haywood & Mac an Ghaill, 1996). Coutler and Greg (2008, p.420) also argue "If it was natural for women to teach, if women were best suited to work with young, then because of this they should be seen as rendering a service out of love and should not expect high levels of remuneration or autonomy". They have indicated that in a situation where 'proper masculinity' is constructed in opposition to femininity then one of the main reasons which has contributed to the low status of teaching as a potential occupation for men was the increasing numbers of women (Coutler & Greg, 2008). Cushman (2005) has also argued that the reason for it being deemed as 'low status' is inextricably connected to society's conventional view that occupations involving children are the responsibility of women, and to the historical underrating of and poor pay for the work of women. Senzo expresses how he would have reacted had one of his friends gone into Foundation Phase teaching:

Ok firstly. Shocked I'll be shocked "you doing Foundation Phase?" "why?" "why are you doing the Foundation Phase?" I will kind of like try to change his mentality to be on the FET phase "come on bra, FET phase you gonna get posts, you gonna be a principal" you know tell him the advantages of being on the FET phase than of being on the Foundation Phase because in the Foundation Phase

most teachers in primary schools are women so you get bored over there as a male teacher.

Senzo's apparent dismay if his friend had to choose to go into the early years of teaching is not uncommon. By doing so he reveals how masculinity is policed and regulated and males who choose to deviate must be brought to order. Senzo does this by indicating that he would try to convince his friend to go into the higher years which is more apt for a male as opposed to the early years of teaching which is dominated by women. Pleck (1995) argues that in addition to men having a hierarchy over women, men establish hierarchies and rankings amongst each other based on criteria of 'masculinity'. "Men at each rank of masculinity compete with each other, with whatever resources they have, for the differential payoffs that patriarchy allows men" (Pleck, 1995, p.8). It can therefore be argued that Senzo is comparing the hierarchies of men who choose to teach in the early years to those who go in to the higher years of teaching, with the latter being more beneficial by eliciting payoffs such as increasing his chances to be promoted into a higher management position (i.e. a school principal). Collinson and Hearn (1996) also indicate that men's gender identities are usually constructed, compared and evaluated by self and others according to a range of criteria citing personal 'success' in the workplace. Williams (1995b) has further argued that men appear to come across the most insulting denigration from the public when they are in female-identified strongholds, in this study it is teaching in the early years of schooling. These public apprehensions may consequently result in them being pushed into more 'legitimate' and influential positions for men (Williams, 1995b). The more 'legitimate' position in this case would be the teaching of the higher years, as Senzo indicates he would try to change his male friends' mindset to move out of the early years of teaching and into the more male-appropriate higher years of teaching. Cushman (2005) also found that male primary teacher respondents in his study also received negative feedback from others, and some like Senzo even tried to convince them to change to secondary school teaching. A respondent in his study indicated that he would be questioned as to why he was going into primary teaching and some would declare that he should be a secondary school teacher (Cushman, 2005). Cushman (2005) revealed that secondary school teaching for the male respondents in his study was assumed to have better prospects than primary teaching. Gosse et al. (2008) similarly revealed how a male primary teacher respondent in their study was also asked why he was not going to be teaching

high school and he got a few strange looks because of this. Anand also mentions that whilst his female friends would have readily accepted a decision to pursue teaching in the Foundation Phase, his male friends on the other hand would have been displeased with his choice. He indicates that their disapproval would occur as a result of a belief that teaching in a high school is more prestigious:

My friends would have been errr well I don't think my friends would have said anything in terms of girls, like all my female friends would have said, ok you know that's cool right but then the males would err err have been reluctant in terms of being happy for me because ya you know we feel that you know being in a high school is more prestigious more uhhh you know I dunno its. you know it just feels right to be in a high school when you a male.

Simon similarly indicates the following when asked if he believed that the reason many males do not do Foundation Phase teaching is as a result of its low status as a profession,

Uhhh well, in public you seen more as a public figure; if you teach in err like let say err a nice high school, whereas in primary school you just follow the development you not really there as an icon.

By comparing teaching in a high school to that of being a public figure and icon, Simon has attached a higher status to high school teaching. He attaches a low status to teaching in a primary school by revealing that working as a primary school teacher; you will not be seen as an icon. The responses by Anand and Simon are consistent with the findings in Cushman's (2005) study which also found that in general male teachers especially had connected a higher status to secondary teaching. Cushman (2005) argues that should one's decision to teach result in the

cross-examination or disparaging comments, then this in itself is a sign of the lack of prestige that seems to be assigned to this profession. He further indicates that such responses will be sufficient to operate as a deterrent to those pursuing teaching (Cushman, 2005). Adams and Coltrane (2005) argue that every male-dominated association has its own rituals that deal with strengthening masculine notions and ideals of entitlement. These are already internalized at a personal level and at an abstract level it causes them to appear as, more than ever, part of the 'natural' gender order (Adams & Coltrane, 2005). Based on the comments made by Anand and Simon above it is clear that they believe that teaching in a high school is compulsory in order for them to strengthen their masculinity be part of the 'natural' gender order.

Senzo also asserts,

... if you teaching the older ones and you in a high school you are like thought more highly of than when you there teaching in the Foundation Phase... I think because when it comes to teaching the very young ones you must be caring and nurture them but when you teaching the older ones you get them to think on their own and people are gonna see it as more important I guess.

Ashley and Lee (2003) have similarly argued in their research that the key distinction between primary teaching and secondary teaching is that the primary teachers' initial concern is for the wellbeing of the child and rounded growth as a human being. They argue that in secondary schools on the other hand, teachers place greater importance on teaching the curriculum and imparting knowledge of the subject content to learners (Ashley & Lee, 2003). It is for this reason that they conclude that primary school teaching is professed to be a more caring line of work than teaching in secondary schools (Ashley & Lee, 2003).

4.7 A need for more males in the early years of teaching

Despite many of the students characterizing the early years of teaching as being better suited towards females, a few did consider that there might be a need for more males in this area of

teaching. Some of the students felt that there is a need for more male teachers in the early years because these males could in turn serve as male role models for young children. Raj declares that,

Maybe there is a need because you don't know what it's like at the moment because of such a shortage of teachers, so if there was an addition then maybe we could give rise to change compared to how it is now, if there were male role models it would be nice in case they don't have fathers then you gonna be a role model.

Thabiso expresses similar sentiments and asserts,

...I also think it would be good especially for young children to have the influence of a male in school if they don't have a father at home.

Here both Raj and Thabiso declare that males teaching in the early years of schooling would be a good thing especially in cases where children do not have fathers. A male teacher in this area of teaching according to these two participants would serve to make up for the lack of a fatherly figure or lack of male influence at home. Raj further indicates how male teachers in the early years could also serve as male role models in this area of teaching, more especially when the learners do not have fathers. In his study Carrington (2002) similarly found that more men were inclined to concur with the suggestion that more males were required as role models in the primary school environment. A respondent in David's (1996) study also revealed that there was a need for more males in the early years as children from single-parent homes need to have a strong male figure and they need this as early on as possible. Carrington and McPhee (2008) further argue that there exists a universally held perception that boys' educational experiences continue to be inhibited by a lack of male role models. Roulston and Mills (2000) reveal that the causal factors of underachievement often identified with the underachieving male frequently identify single-parent households with a female head and the feminization of teaching. Therefore the case that has been put forward for inspiring men to work in early childhood care or education

services is that men can present themselves as role models for the children, especially boys (Cameron, 2001). Cushman (2005) however argues that the premise that the male educator can make up in some way for the lack of a male figure in the home needs additional investigation since it implies that on the one hand, the child lacking a male care provider in the home is inevitably deprived and, on the other hand children from homes with abusive or neglectful fathers are advantaged in comparison to those with none. The claims made by Raj and Thabiso about males being needed in the early years of teaching because sometimes children come from homes without fathers and this would provide them with a much needed fatherly figure and male influence therefore becomes highly questionable. This is because their reasoning behind wanting to provide these children with fatherly figures in the early years of teaching (something which they feel is necessary for children to have) does not accommodate those children that do have fathers but these fathers as mentioned by Cushman (2005) are abusive or negligent. The views expressed by the two students in this study were consistent with the findings from Carrington's (2002) study where he also found that the males in his study were more inclined to indicate that more male educators are required as male role models in the primary school environment. Leeshaun further elaborated on why it is necessary to have more males in the early years of schooling:

...I think also it would be a good thing because when you teach young children, often females teach young children from a female perspective, ok and you find that I'm not saying that this is true in all cases but you find that mostly the female learners benefit more from having being taught by a female teacher because children also mimic and model the behaviours and the characters sort of like of their teachers, ok, so you trying that with the females they would have more beneficial part in having being taught by a female teacher, whereas you find that if we had a balance also male learners would also have a role model or some role models or some character or some characteristics they might relate with.

Leeshaun points out how female learners usually benefit from having a female teacher because she would teach the learners based on her feminine perspective. He argues that if there were more male teachers teaching young children then this would serve to benefit the male learners as well since they would have someone they could relate to. He also argues that male learners would benefit from having a male teacher as he would be regarded as a role model for the male learners. Carrington and McPhee (2008) similarly discovered that it has been said that children are more likely to relate better to teachers belonging to the same gender as themselves (and vice versa). Martino (2008) has also argued that present discussions concerning male role models within the context of the lack of males in the early years of teaching is a cultural venture of re-masculinisation that extends to summoning the white adult male heterosexual subject as the idealized role model proficient enough to improve the social dilemmas imposing boys' social and academic wellbeing in the school environment. However in contrast to Leeshaun's claims that female learners would benefit more from a female teacher whereas male learners would benefit from and relate more to a male teacher, Carrington et al. (2008) have on the other hand found no pragmatic verification to substantiate such claims that there is an affinity for male educators to enhance the learning performance of boys and, equally for female educators to enhance the learning performance of girls. Aside from indicating that more males were needed in the Foundation Phase in order to serve as male role models, other students cited the need for more males in order to strike a more balanced ratio of male and female educators in the Foundation Phase. This rationale behind the need for males in the Foundation Phase was supported by Leeshaun who indicates the following,

We need to balance the, we need to balance the ratio between females and male teachers, obviously you know we, errr, equality won't be reached we can talk about it but it won't be reached.

In addition to this, Simon, who also indicated a need for more males in order to achieve a gender balance of teachers in the early years of schooling, declares,

Ya sure there's always a need for more... Uhmm just to have a balance, a male can provide something different that a female cant... Errr mmmm more of errr hands on approach, get the children to do more activities in terms of of uhmm physical activities than just being in the classroom and stuff... it doesn't just have to be a lady teaching and also it could be nice to have a balance because there are both boys and girls who are in this phase so why not male and female teachers?

Here Leeshan and Simon advocate the need for more males in the teaching of the early years simply to create a more gender-equitable balance of teachers in this area of teaching. Moors (2010) has similarly argued that within a democratic society, it is only fair that there should be an equitable balance of male teachers reflecting the ratio of boys or young men. Whilst revealing that there is a need for more male teachers in the early years in order to have a balance, Simon also declares that a male teacher in comparison to a female teacher may have something different to offer in the classroom. Simon's sentiments were consistent to that of a male respondent teaching in the early years in David's (1996) study who also maintained that as a male he had taken a different perspective and tone to the classroom. A male respondent in Johnston's et al. (1999) study also felt that it was important to have males teach in a primary schools and mentioned how just as you would need your parents, both a mother and a father to guide you, in the same way you would also require the experience of both genders in order to gain knowledge from your teachers. Kaylyn further elaborates on this issue and reveals,

Yes there is a need for more males because there are too few females there I mean there are too few males there in the Foundation Phase and there are more females. The boys in the primary school need to be motivated err into education itself because uhmm if you ask a boy in primary school what you want to become he will say a policeman or because those are like completely male dominated things, because they wouldn't say a teacher because all the teachers that are

around them are all female in the Foundation Phase specifically but if you get a man or a male teaching your primary school or Foundation Phase they will automatically say oh I want to be like Mr Smith, you know, so it will encourage them. They really need male role models... I just think that it would be nice if more males take to foundation and ECD phase because it can change the setting of a school because primary schools are predominantly feminine and it can change the stereotype.

Kaylyn also indicates that there is a need for more males in the early years of teaching. The reason why he advocates for more males in this area of teaching is because he believes that this would serve to allow boys at a primary school level to see a male teaching in the early years as opposed to always seeing female teachers in this area of teaching. Kaylyn argues that this is important because it encourages male learners to see the teaching of young children as a fitting career option for a male and not as a career that can only be done if you are a female. This would in turn, according to Kaylyn, influence these male learners' decision to also go into the early years as a result of wanting to emulate those male teachers of young children. Thabiso conveys similar sentiments to that of Kaylyn and indicates,

I think it's important that there is a balance so that children can see that a male can also teach there so that people can see that this is a job not only for women...

Thabiso asserts that it is important for children to see a male teaching in the early years because it would serve to break down the image that this is a job only meant for women. Marsiglio (2009) has expressed a very similar view to the one communicated by both Kaylyn and Thabiso and he maintains that if there was a more gender balanced proportion of teachers then this would send a potent message to young children that learning in a school situation is neither masculine or feminine, but is rather a human experience. Kaylyn has also mentioned that if more males

enter the early years of teaching then this would help change the stereotype of the early years of teaching being a feminine domain. Marsiglio (2009) holds a similar view to that of Kaylyn and he argues that male educators can illustrate to both boys and girls that males are competent enough to offer a supportive learning atmosphere and that young people should be motivated to see careers as open to individuals irrespective of gender stereotypes. A respondent in Sumison's (1999) study further revealed how children are shaped and moulded at a young age, and that one of his reasons for going into the early years of teaching was to illustrate to children that they should not be restricted by their sex in their selection of an occupation and by being there in the early years of teaching he was demonstrating to children that they can do whatever they want to. Connell (1995) has also argued that the perception that masculinity is the internalized male sex role is the catalyst for social change, and given that the role customs are social truths, they can be tainted by social processes. This according to Connell (1995) will occur whenever the interventions of socialization, for example family, school and mass media and so forth, begin to transmit new expectations. In the same way Kaylyn and Thabiso have indicated if children begin to see males teaching in the early years in a social setting of a school then this would change the common perception that this is a job meant only for woman and it would also according to Kaylyn motivate male learners to one day enter this area of teaching. This would in turn as mentioned by Connell (1995) allow for social change of the internalized male sex role, with the male sex role here changing to accommodate the early years of teaching as a suitable profession for a male.

4.8 Men who teach in the Foundation Phase: “Aiyhh I think maybe they can be seen as gay sometimes”

Mlungisi indicates the following about males, who teach in the early years,

... in the early child years if you are teaching children you need to play with them you need to do their things and they will not take you seriously even if you go into the community; they will see this male is not a male he is something else.

According to Skelton (2009) one reason for the condemnation of primary education as an appropriate career for males is the interrelationship between (hegemonic) gender and (hetero) sexuality. Skelton (2012) argues that if an aspiration to work with young children is a feminine feature, and femininity is ‘other’ to (dominant) masculinity, then men who want to engage in (feminine) primary teaching, by default, bring their (hetero) sexuality into question. In the same way by the community characterizing a male who teaches young children as not a male but as something else, Mlungisi is also depicting such a male as ‘other’ to (dominant) masculinity. The comments Mlungisi has made surrounding the communities’ reaction to a male teaching in the early years are a clear indication of how a male entering this area of teaching would result in the questioning of this male’s heterosexuality, as indicated by Skelton (2012). The effect of this is that men who want to educate young children run the possibility of being considered as abnormal, unusual or lacking (Mills et al. 2004). Here in this situation Mlungisi shows how dominant hegemonic masculinity is also associated with heterosexual power and teaching in the early years can be seen as a stain on sexuality. This means that if men are going to pursue this area of teaching then there must be something wrong with them. Masculinity according to Kaufman (1995, p.16) is “a social institution with a tenuous relationship to that with which it is supposed to be synonymous: our maleness, our biological sex”. He argues that a young child does not understand that sex does not equal gender and for him in order to be a male is to be what he perceives as being masculine (Kaufman, 1995). Consequently to be unmasculine is to be desexed or “castrated” (Kaufman, 1995). This is clearly seen in the comments made by Mlungisi about how the community would see a male who risked his masculinity by teaching in the early years as not a male but as something else.

Many of the students in this study elaborated on this questioning of a male’s heterosexuality and they indicated how a male teacher in the Foundation Phase would often be characterized as being gay. Scelo asserts,

Aiyhh I think maybe people can see them as homosexual because this teaching is dominated by womens.

Thabiso similarly maintains,

I think maybe society might see them as gay because mostly females are seen doing it.

Here both Thabo and Scelo maintain how a male teaching in the early years may be characterized as being gay or homosexual because it is an area of teaching that is dominated largely by females. Connell (1995) has also revealed how in homophobic ideology the boundary between being straight or gay is blurred with the boundary between being masculine and feminine, consequently gay men are imagined as feminized men whilst lesbians as masculinised women. Connell (1995) argues that this notion exists despite the fact that gay men also know the prevalence of homosexual desire among those regarded as highly masculine. Hence the arguments made by Scelo and Thabiso about males being depicted as gay for wanting to enter a feminized area of teaching do not hold. These findings were consistent to that of Mills (2004) who similarly indicates that males who do not abide to hegemonised kinds of masculinities, frequently by carrying out behaviours considered to be feminine, are as a result often depicted as ‘abnormal’ or gay and become marginalized within the social organization of masculinities. In addition to this Jayden mentions the following when asked whether or not he believed that males who choose to teach in the early years end up getting a negative reaction from society,

I’ve never seen anything like that or heard of anything like that but I’m sure that they would because like parents will think like, oh, this guy is teaching small kids, he may be gay or something like that you know.

Here Jayden associates a negative reaction to a male in the Foundation Phase from parents who may think he is gay. By pointing out that this situation where a male may be found to be gay by parents, Jayden is implying that parents would in turn possibly display a negative attitude to a male who is gay. According to Pleck (1995, p.8) “in our society, one of the most critical rankings among men deriving from patriarchal sexual politics is the division between gay and straight men”. He argues that this separation comprises of potent negative consequences for gay men whilst at the same time privileging straight men (Pleck, 1995). Hence by positioning the labelling

of a male teacher in the early years as gay by parents as a negative reaction from society, Jayden is drawing attention to the division between straight and gay men, which in turn have powerful negative consequences for latter (Pleck, 1995). Pleck (1995) further argues that in addition to this division our society also makes use of the male heterosexual-homosexual dichotomy as a fundamental representation for all standings of masculinity, for the separation on any basis between males who are 'real men' and have power and males who do not. He argues that "any kind of powerlessness or refusal to compete becomes imbued with the imagery of homosexuality" (Pleck, 1995, p.8). This can be seen clearly when Scelo and Thabiso position a male in the early years of teaching as gay for working in an area of teaching usually dominated by women and not appropriate for 'real men'. This can be seen again when Jayden indicates that parents may label a male teaching young children as gay, with the teaching of young children in this case being deemed inappropriate for a 'real man'. A respondent in a study carried out by Martino and Rezai-Rashti (2010) similarly highlights that homophobia occurs in parents' opinion of male educators as gay. She points out that parents prefer women as a result of the perception that any male who has the aspiration to teach young children has to be gay and thus there is a strong call to avert their children from being exposed to that kind of influence (Martino & Rezai-Rashti, 2010). The respondent also added that "parents are afraid that the 'gay teacher is spewing their philosophy on my child' and that 'my young child wouldn't be able to come home and tell me that'" (Martino & Rezai-Rashti, 2010, p.252).

4.9 Males securing managerial positions in primary schools: "if they want to teach young children they must do it because they want to not for promotional purposes"

Another interesting theme that emerged from the interviews with the students was the issue that most male teachers in primary schools (at least more often than females) move into management posts. Leeshaun asserts,

In the Foundation Phase you find that most of the males teachers, the minority which is the male teachers in the Foundation Phase, uhmm don't stay some of

them don't stay very long in the Foundation Phase and those that do stay end up in promotional posts and I think that because they are such a minority it makes it a disadvantage for female teachers because they are given the responsibility of management positions within a school. You'll find that you go to a primary school there's about five male teachers and the rest are females and you'll find that the principal is male deputy male, HOD male you know all of those things. I think if they want to teach young children they must do it because they want to, not for promotional purposes.

The revelations made by Leeshawn are consistent with the findings in Skelton's (2003) study where her respondents noted that there were few male primary school teachers as they all appeared to be deputy heads or heads, not just normal teachers. A female respondent in her study maintained that it was good to have a higher number of male teachers, especially as class teachers because she felt that there were many males as head teachers and deputies (Skelton, 2003). A male elementary teacher in David's (1996) study also revealed that it was not uncommon for male elementary teachers to eventually move out of the classroom into the principal's office. He revealed how in his first two years of teaching his female principal had been determined to see him head in a similar direction, regardless of the fact that being an administrator or running a school had never interested him (David, 1996). Jones (2007) further mentions how a respondent had revealed that he was unsure whether he would stay on as a primary school teacher. He argued that if he were to stay on this would elicit some very funny reactions; consequently he pointed out that he would rather move out of teaching in the frontier and move into deputy head or head positions (Jones, 2007). Jones (2007) argues that particular discourses may be vehicles for driving male teachers away from the classroom location and motivating them towards positions seen as more apt for men. Many students in Jones (2007) study regarded management positions as an apparent end point for their occupations and they were making a calculated decision to enter and rapidly acquire superior salaried managerial posts. Leeshawn's claims about a greater number of female teachers but males being largely dominant in managerial positions are supported by a study which indicates that in South Africa

“a gender analysis of teachers by seniority has shown that although women make up 74% of basic grade teachers and 66% of heads of department, they comprise only 41% of deputy principals and principals” (Morrell et al., 2009, p.169). Evidently in South Africa although teaching is a feminized profession, males are seen to dominate largely in senior leadership positions in the teaching profession. This practice promotes gender inequality as it often results in uneven power relationships between men and women, in which males attain dominance over women, resulting in their subordination to men in all sectors of society (Coetzee, 2001). Francis and Skelton (2001) have argued that this decision-making facet of masculinity may to a certain extent reveal why primary teachers are positioned in the higher years of primary schools where they assume positions managing and controlling older learners and inhabit senior management positions. It is evident from Leeshaun’s revelations that he believes that some males only go into the early years of teaching simply in order to secure a management position. In this study Jayden also remarks how he would prefer a managerial position in the Foundation Phase to being a teacher in the senior phase,

To be honest with you I'd rather be an HOD in the Foundation Phase than be a normal teacher in the senior phase but I don't consider it a low status profession

Here Jayden contradicts himself by indicating that he does not consider Foundation Phase teaching as a low status profession whilst at the same time maintaining that he would only do it if he could assume a management position as the head of department in the Foundation Phase. That his desire to attain a management position after teaching the early years is typical is supported by Thornton (2001) who found that many male respondents in her study planned on making progress in their primary teaching professions and to attain a promotion. The male respondents in her study planned to move rapidly into management as they were aware of their rarity value in this particular profession (Thornton, 2001). One of the respondents revealed how as a result of a shortage of male teachers, schools are more prone to push you ahead to preserve males in the profession (Thornton, 2001). Cameron (2001) argues that the matter concerning men’s progression through organizational hierarchies and ability to reach senior posts and higher pay may suggest a compromise with the notion of attaining gender equality through the employment of men. She indicates that there is limited use in campaigning for men’s work with children if

they simply reposition themselves into management (Cameron, 2001). The repercussions of this according to Cameron (2001) is that the kind of role models males would exhibit to children would reinforce conventional gender stereotypes of men's work occupying a higher status as compared to that of females.

4.10 Culture and teaching in the early years: "In the African culture the men is not responsible for the young children"

Connell (2000, p.30) argues that "masculinity exists impersonally in culture as a subject position in the process of representation, in the structures of language and other symbol systems". Consequently it became increasingly important to analyse the male students' cultural views regarding males in the early years of teaching. Most of the Indian, coloured and white male students in this study felt that it would be acceptable in their cultures and communities for a male to teach in the early years of schooling:

Raj: Yes I think it is acceptable because in many Indian families you do find that the father plays a big role in their children's lives even when they are young so I don't think there would be a problem with it, although you don't really see many Indian males teaching in the Foundation Phase , but you do find them in primary schools teaching the little older kids but not in the Foundation Phase.

Simon: Ya of course... Well for example I coach sport and we usually have from ages seven to eleven and they are all male coaches so I mean anyone can like a male can actually be accepted and teach those young children and make a difference.

Leeshaun: Yes it is acceptable in my culture and community for males it is acceptable because I've also seen quite a lot of not a big increase per se but I've

seen an increase in the number of male teachers that are teaching in the primary school of which I attend.

These responses contrasted with those of the African students in this study who deemed it unacceptable in the African culture for a male to teach in the Foundation Phase or work with young children. All the African male participants in this study had confirmed that working with young children was an activity that was best suited for women and it therefore would be inappropriate for a male to be seen working there. Asibonge asserts,

No, it is not acceptable because, because the young childrens it is expected that the female ones will look after them and the men should look after the older ones. In the African culture the men is not responsible for the young children.

Sbu similarly asserts,

No, because in my culture it is mostly women's who look after young children not men and people will look at you and say what are you doing there when it's a women's responsibility to go teach young children.

Thabiso also expresses similar sentiments and reveals the following,

I think in the African culture we mostly associate women with young children and if a man had to go there it wouldn't be accepted because we see women as the ones who should look after children even though a man can also do it, it's just how it is.

Here Asibonge and Sbu both maintain that in African culture woman are chiefly responsible for attending to the well-being of their children. They therefore argue that the teaching of young children by a male would not be accepted in the African culture because women are the ones who are supposed to deal with young children not men. Some of the African participants had indicated that women were more closely connected with young children because of the parental roles at home where the mother had played a huge role in terms of caregiver.

Scelo asserts,

... I can't afford to teach grade R or 1-3 because let me say, in my culture we, we know that men is a home supporter, as a home supporter you I think when you are a living old mens in my culture or you go to Johannesburg to get some job to support their families. People who are supposed to, to be, to work with children are women that (laughs.) I think it affect us and it is part of my culture men are going to work hard and women's they are supposed to stay with young children and provide anything that is needed by children. I think that affect us and our belief. In ama in our culture.

Mlungisi expresses similar sentiments to that of Scelo and he declares,

No because men are supposed to work and provide so for them to work with children it is not suitable.

Here Scelo clearly identifies the mother in the African culture as responsible for childcare at home, whereas the father is regarded as a home supporter who goes out to work to earn an income for their family. Therefore he argues that it would not be accepted in the African culture for a male to be working with young children because this is regarded as a women's job. Morrell (2006) has similarly indicated that in an African context fathers are often presented as absent not only because of the migrant labour system which physically took men away, but also because of the stern patriarch and present but dominant and uncaring father (Morrell, 2006). Hunter (2006) also argues that the traditional role of African fathers had been shaped by colonialism, migrant labour, and a system of customary law that supported African men's power as the head of the household. He further argues that migrant labour meant that whatever intimacy and emotional support fathers had provided had become increasingly impossible. A good definition of a father according to Morrell (2006) may well emphasise taking responsibility for paternity, supporting the child and being a good role model. This places less emphasis on emotional engagement and more emphasis on the material aspect of fatherhood (Morrell, 2006). Hosking (2006) reveals that

the workplace has not been sympathetic at all to working fathers, as homecare and childcare have been constructed as female activities and the concept of father has been increasingly narrowed down to economic provision for the family. He argues that two external factors have played an important role in determining the roles of men at work and in the family (Hosking, 2006). Both industrial and agricultural work, according to Hosking (2006), require most men to engage in physically demanding work outside the home, which leads to the development of two different worlds for men, the first being the world of work where most of them attach themselves to physical tasks during the course of the working day, and the second world, the home to which they return at night to rest after the day's work and prepare for the challenges of the following day's labours. This results in a situation where the mothers are regarded as the primary care givers of their children and very little much more is expected from fathers other than to be a good provider and protector of their families (Hosking, 2006). These could be the underlying reasons as to why the African male students in this study regard a male teaching in the early years as unacceptable in the African culture.

4.11 Conclusion

In an attempt to ascertain why many male teacher trainees do not enter the early years of teaching, this analysis has provided greater insight into how dominant constructions of masculinity and femininity play a huge role in determining their decision to not enter this area of teaching. Based on this analysis it is clearly evident that several issues may serve to deter males from entering the early years of teaching. These issues ranged from their own personal cultural beliefs regarding teaching in the early years to other issues concerning the negativity surrounding males who do go on to teach in the early years of schooling. During the interviews the males would often disassociate themselves from the teaching of the early years by constructing it as a job ideally suited to females who were seen to present the necessary feminine qualities required to teach learners in the early years. Many of the participants described how a male entering the early years of teaching may invite a negative reaction from others, especially their friends. A few even mentioned how they themselves would undermine a male's decision to enter the early years of teaching by positioning them as 'weak' or as a 'coward' for doing so. However whilst constructing the early years of teaching as a largely feminine activity, some males did feel there

was a need for a more equitable balance of male and female teachers in this area of teaching. Lastly this analysis has also presented a comprehensive understanding of how male teacher trainees had often encountered several experiences about the teaching of the early years which had in some way influenced their thinking that this is largely a feminized domain. These experiences had in some way significantly contributed to their decision to avoid specializing in this area of teaching.

The final and concluding chapter of this dissertation provides a comprehensive summary of the studies main findings. It also provides a list of possible recommendations for implementing suitable intervention strategies to ensure that more males specialise in the early years of teaching at Edgewood Campus.

Chapter Five Conclusion

5.1 Introduction

This study has attempted to understand why male BEd students in a local South African higher education context are reluctant to pursue teaching in the early years. It has made a contribution towards understanding more specifically the reasons why some males are not going into the early years of teaching. Whilst working towards achieving these aims this study has also revealed how the constructions of masculinity have impacted to lower the concentration of men opting to teach young children. In this concluding chapter I intend to firstly provide a comprehensive summary of each chapter in this dissertation. Secondly I will go on to highlight the main findings of this study. Lastly I intend to provide possible recommendations that can be employed to counteract the problem surrounding the reluctance of males to enter the early years of teaching.

In Chapter one of this dissertation I have outlined the broad issues around why males are reluctant to pursue teaching in the early years. I have also provided the reader with background knowledge on this phenomenon. In addition to this, Chapter one has identified the main focus of this study, its aims and objectives as well as the key research questions which have framed the overall study.

The first section of Chapter two in this dissertation provided a review of literature on all the important research that has been previously done on the reasons why males are reluctant to pursue teaching in the early years. In this Chapter local as well international studies on this phenomenon were reviewed. However although there have been studies conducted around teachers and/or masculinities in South Africa (Bhana, de Lange, & Mitchell, 2009; Morrell & Jewkes, 2011; Morrell, 1998) studies conducted more specifically on the lack of males in the early years of teaching have been scarce. The review of related literature in this chapter therefore presented a discussion on studies of men, masculinities and teaching in the early years, particularly from the West, as there is a dearth of research on this matter in the South African context. It is also important to note that whilst many of these Western studies focused on the

experiences of male pre-service teachers who were currently pursuing the early years of teaching (Johnston et al., 1999; Montecinos & Nielsen, 2004; Mulholland & Hansen, 2005; Smedley, 1998; Warwick, Warwick & Hopper, 2012; Weaver-Hightower, 2011), there had been limited research focusing on male pre-service teachers who did not opt to go into the early years of teaching and their reasons for doing so. The multiple or diverse ways in which ‘dominant notions of masculinity’ contribute to the reluctance of males entering the early years of teaching were discussed in this Chapter and the experiences of male teachers who are in the early years of teaching were also highlighted briefly. Highlighting such experiences was considered to be important as the very same experiences may be a contributing factor in the reluctance of males to enter the early years of teaching. The second section of this Chapter centred on the theoretical framework which had been adopted in this study. Having drawn from evidence in the literature signifying the important role that the construction of masculinities played in influencing the reluctance of males to enter the early years of teaching, I therefore made use of Connell’s (1995) construction of masculinities as the theoretical framework to analyse the data collected in this study.

Chapter three of this study explained and highlighted the research methods and data collection methods that were used to collect and analyse the data in this study. A qualitative research approach was used to generate relevant and reliable data for this study. In addition to this a constructionist research paradigm was used in order to disclose the extent to which the male students’ own constructions of masculinity had impacted on their decision to avoid the early years of teaching. An explanation and description of the purposive sampling procedure used to select the 15 male students who participated in this study was also provided in this chapter. The data collection process entailed individual interviews with each of the 15 male students. Chapter three also highlighted and discussed the limitations of this research study, the study’s reliability and validity and the ethical considerations that were employed during the research process. Lastly Chapter three discussed and described how thematic analysis would be used to analyse the collected data during the data analysis process.

In Chapter four the data from each of the interviews that had been conducted for this particular study were presented and analysed using thematic content analysis. The collected data were

interpreted and discussed in order to provide the reader with an understanding of what the results mean. Connell's (1995) constructions of masculinities were used to describe how the constructions of masculinity have impacted on the reluctance of the BEd male students to enter the early years of teaching. The findings were also compared to other studies done within this particular field of research to highlight differences and similarities. The major themes to emerge from the data were as follows:

- Teaching Foundation Phase- *"a woman's job"*;
- *"We as men don't have patience"*;
- Foundation Phase as a feminized area of teaching: *"I didn't see any males there so as a male I didn't even think about going there"*;
- A negative portrayal of males who pursue Foundation Phase teaching: *"to be on ECD or Foundation Phase is just not ayoba (expression of delight, excitement, agreement and approval)"*;
- Disassociation from the Foundation Phase is a confirmation of and instantiation of masculine power: *"As a guy you should step up and teach a higher grade"*;
- A need for more males in the early years of teaching;
- Men who teach in the Foundation Phase: *"Aiyhh I think maybe they can be seen as gay sometimes"*;
- Males securing managerial positions in primary schools: *"if they want to teach young children they must do it because they want to not for promotional purposes"*; and lastly
- Culture and teaching in the early years: *"In the African culture the men is not responsible for the young children"*

5.2 Main findings

This study has found that the constructions of masculinity do indeed play a role in influencing the concentration of men opting to teach young children and from this I conclude that male accounts of teaching and teachers of young children is an account of gender and doing masculinity. It was found that several issues served to deter the male students in this study from entering into the early years of teaching and these issues dealt largely with the dominant constructions of masculinity and femininity. Most of the male students in this study disassociated

themselves from the early years of teaching by constructing it as a profession ideally suited towards females. They felt that women possessed all the necessary qualities required to teach in the early years of schooling, whilst males on the other hand did not. These qualities included being patient, loving, caring, and nurturing and motherly. Drudy (2008) similarly described ideological connection involving women's domestic responsibilities and their obligation to teaching, which suggests that females are more 'naturally' predisposed to roles of nurture than males. Males on the contrary were characterised as being unsuitable to teach in the early years because they did not have patience and would become easily frustrated and irritated teaching young children. A study conducted by Sargent (2004) on men who worked in childhood also found that there was uncertainty surrounding the issue of whether males were psychologically or emotionally equipped to spend extending periods of time around children. These uncertainties revealed how persistent myths dealing with men's lack of patience and their incapability to be child centred have contributed to the belief that males are unfit to work in the early years of teaching (Sargent, 2004).

The students' constructions of masculinity were made much earlier on in life as they recalled their own experiences of being learners in a feminized environment. The majority of the students confirmed that, in their primary school, teachers in the Foundation Phase were predominantly female and in most cases this phase was taught exclusively by female teachers. Some students even indicated that because they had not seen a male teacher in the Foundation Phase, this had played a role in influencing their decision to not specialise in the Foundation Phase. The sentiments expressed by the students regarding their reluctance to enter the early years of teaching because they know it to be a feminized area of work were consistent with the findings by Carrington (2002), who found that the image of teaching as a feminized profession particularly in the early years persists to operate as a huge constraint upon the recruitment of males in this area of teaching.

Many of the students also mentioned how males who pursued Foundation Phase teaching would be portrayed in a negative light. Some felt that if a male had to go into the early years of teaching then he would be belittled by others as he would be identified as being weak and scared to teach older learners. Furthermore teaching or not teaching in the early years was found to be regulated

by others, and one's masculinity would be called into question for having chosen to teach in the early years. A few students even indicated how they themselves would undermine a male's decision to enter the early years of teaching by positioning them as 'weak' or as a 'coward' for doing so. Many of the students indicated that as a male, pursuing the early years of teaching would often result in one's heterosexuality being questioned. They mentioned how a male teaching in the early years may be characterized as being gay or homosexual because it is an area of teaching that is dominated largely by females. Another student attached a negative connotation to being seen as gay by revealing that a negative reaction to a male teacher in the early years of teaching would be that parents may think he is gay. These findings were similar to that of the outlook expressed by Williams (1995b), where he has argued that males who pursue 'female' occupations are frequently deemed as failures or sexual deviants.

Some of the students also attached a low status to the early years of teaching and a higher status to teaching in the higher years. Teaching in the early years was also deemed as a low status profession due to its association with women. One student mentioned how as a man you would be characterized as weak by doing this 'woman's job'. Haywood and Mac an Ghaill (1996) also reveal how signs of weakness in many public spaces are associated with femininity. They argue that an essential feature of masculinities in the workplace was competence whereas incompetence on the other hand was deemed as failure, weakness or womanly (Haywood & Mac an Ghaill, 1996). Coutler and Greg (2008, p.420) also argue "If it was natural for women to teach, if women were best suited to work with young, then because of this they should be seen as rendering a service out of love and should not expect, high levels of remuneration or autonomy". They have indicated that in a situation where 'proper masculinity' is constructed in opposition to femininity then one of the main reasons which has contributed to the low status of teaching as a potential occupation for men was the increasing numbers of women (Coutler & Greg, 2008). Cushman (2005) has also argued that the reason for it being deemed as 'low status' is inextricably connected to society's conventional view that work involving children is the responsibility of women and the work of women being undervalued historically and poorly paid. Many of the students also established their male power by associating masculinity with intellectual strength. Teaching in the higher years was deemed as a more appropriate profession for a male and the students characterized it as being more challenging and intellectually

demanding as opposed to the early years of teaching which was seen as more of a caring and nurturing profession suited towards females. Johnston et al's. (1999) study was consistent with these findings; they argue that it is likely that primary school teaching is considered to be 'low level' work that is not intellectually demanding and since intellectual power is powerfully linked with masculinity, males might consequently avoid this 'low level' work in favour of a more 'meaningful' profession. They further reveal that the traditional association concerning masculinity and the greater extent of intellectual control and access to power it permits may play a fundamental role in explaining why primary teacher trainees are predominantly female (Johnston et al., 1999). Connell (1995) has also argued how these origins of masculinity concentrating on the idea of the male sex role goes back to the late 19th century disputes about sex difference, when opposition to women's liberation was reinforced by a scientific belief of innate sex difference. He further states that the omission of females from universities for example was justified by claims that the feminine psyche was far too delicately composed to deal with the harshness of academic work (Connell, 1995).

Although many of the students constructed the early years of teaching as a largely feminine activity, some of them did feel there was a need for more male teachers in this area of teaching. Their reasoning behind advocating for more males in this area of teaching varied. Some indicated that male teachers in the early years could serve as male role models for young children especially in situations where children come from homes without fathers. On a similar note Roulston and Mills (2000) reveal that the causal factors of underachievement often identified with the underachieving male frequently identify single-parent families with a female head of the household as well as the experience of the feminization of teaching. Therefore the argument that had been made for encouraging male workers in early childhood care or education services is that males can present role models for the children, especially to boys (Cameron, 2000). Cushman (2005) however argues that the premise that a male teacher can make up in some way for the lack of a male presence in the home needs additional investigation since it implies that on one hand, the child without a male care giver within the home is automatically disadvantaged and, on the other hand children belonging to homes with abusive or negligent fathers are in a better position than those from homes without fathers. The claims made by the students in this study about a need for more males in the early years of teaching because sometimes children

come from homes without fathers and this would provide them with a much needed fatherly figure and male influence therefore becomes highly questionable. This is because their reasoning behind wanting to provide these children with fatherly figures in the early years of teaching (something which they feel is necessary for children to have) does not accommodate those children that do have fathers but these fathers as mentioned by Cushman (2005) are abusive or negligent.

Another student in this study argued that just as female learners usually benefit from having a female teacher because she would teach the learners based on her feminine perspective, if there were more male teachers teaching young children then this would serve to benefit the male learners as well since they would have someone they could relate to. However on the contrary to this student's claims Carrington et al. (2008) have on the other hand found there to be no practical evidence to substantiate such claims that there exists an inclination for male teachers to increase the learning performance of boys and, equally for female teachers to increase the learning performance of girls. Some students also identified a need for more males in the early years of teaching in order to achieve a gender-equitable balance of male and female teachers in this area of teaching, whilst others pointed out that more males in this area of teaching would encourage learners to see the teaching of young children as a fitting career option for a male and not as a career that can only be done if you are a female. Marsiglio (2009) similarly argues that male teachers can show both male and female learners that men are able to offer a supportive learning atmosphere and that young people should be encouraged to view careers as open to anyone irrespective of gender stereotypes.

Whilst advocating a need for more males in the early years of teaching, one student argued that some males would often pursue this area of teaching only because they want to be channelled into a higher management position and not because they sincerely want to teach young children. This student noted the context in South Africa where "a gender analysis of teachers by seniority has shown that although women make up 74% of basic grade teachers and 66% of heads of department, they comprise only 41% of deputy principals and principals" (Morrell et al., 2009, p.169). Evidently in South Africa, although teaching is a feminized profession, males are seen to dominate largely in senior leadership positions in the teaching profession. This practice promotes

gender inequality as it often results in uneven power relationships between men and women, in which males attain dominance over women consequently leading to their subordination to men in all sectors of society (Coetzee, 2001). Francis and Skelton (2001) have also argued that the managerial aspect of masculinity may to a certain extent clarify the reasons why male primary teachers are located within the upper years of primary schools where they assume the responsibility of managing and controlling older learners and also where they hold on to senior management posts.

Many of the student's cultural beliefs played a significant role in influencing their decision to not pursue the early years of teaching. It was found that certain histories and cultural contexts had shaped the students' views about teaching in the early years. The African students in this study deemed it unacceptable in the African culture for a male to teach in the early years or work with young children. Many of them maintained that working with young children was an activity that was best suited for women and it therefore would be inappropriate for a male to be seen working there. Some of the African students attributed this to a home situation in the African culture where the mother is seen as responsible for childcare at home, whereas the father is regarded as a home supporter who goes out to work to earn an income for their family. As a result of their own cultural contexts these students found it to be unacceptable in the African culture for a male to be working with young children in the early years of schooling because it was regarded as a women's job. Hunter (2006) also argues that the traditional role of African fathers had been shaped by colonialism, migrant labour, and a system of customary law that supported African men's power as the head of the household. He further argues that migrant labour meant that whatever intimacy and emotional support fathers had provided had become increasingly impossible. A good definition of a father, according to Morrell (2006), may well emphasise taking responsibility for paternity, supporting the child and being a good role model. This places less emphasis on emotional engagement and more emphasis on the material aspect of fatherhood (Morrell, 2006). Both industrial and agricultural work, according to Hosking (2006), require most men to engage in physically demanding work outside the home, which leads to the development of two different worlds for men, the first being the world of work where most of them attach themselves to physical tasks during the course of the working day, and the second world, the home to which they return at night to rest after the day's work and prepare for the

challenges of the following days labours. This results in a situation where the mothers are regarded as the primary care givers of their children and very little much more is expected from fathers other than to be a good provider and protector of their families (Hosking, 2006). These could be the underlying reasons as to why the African male students in this study regard a male teaching in the early years as unacceptable in the African culture.

5.3 Possible recommendations

Amidst the scarcity of male undergraduate students specialising in the early years of teaching at Edgewood Campus (DMI, 2013), this study has shown how a number of underlying issues have influenced the reluctance of these male students to pursue teaching in the early years. It has especially shown how these male students' constructions of masculinities played a crucial role in deterring them from pursuing the early years of teaching. Having shed greater light on this issue it is imperative that suitable intervention strategies need to be employed at Edgewood Campus to ensure that more males go into the early years of teaching. This would in turn provide a platform for the achievement of a more balanced ratio of male and female teachers in the early years of teaching. The achievement of a more balanced ratio of male and female teachers in this area of teaching is imperative as it can be seen as a significant step towards the realization of gender equality in the workplace. Based on the findings of this particular study, it can be argued that the intervention strategies implemented to attract more males to specialise in the early years of teaching at Edgewood Campus, must focus on changing currently held ideas regarding masculinities which position the early years of teaching as an unsuitable masculine activity. This is important because "men who do not adhere to hegemonised forms of masculinities, often by performing behaviours deemed 'feminine', are thus often constructed as 'abnormal' or gay and become marginalized within the social organization of masculinities" (Mills, 2004. p.34). This was clearly shown in this study where many male students portrayed teaching of the early years as a feminine activity and marginalized men in such teaching by characterizing them as weak, as a coward or as gay. Cushman (2005) argues that in addition to coping with difficulties all teachers face with the stresses of teaching, the added stresses associated with an individual's maleness might, not surprisingly, discourage males from entering the teaching profession or promote the early departure from the profession. Changing such ideas about masculinities is therefore increasingly important in order to attract more males into the early years of teaching.

Furthermore interventions must be designed to help break down the existing barriers and stereotypes which make males reluctant to enter the early years of teaching. Cushman (2007) has also argues that, if the marketing and recruitment drives designed to attract more men to the teaching profession fail to take into account the underlying issues which act as barriers, then it is unlikely that the current trend regarding the lack of male primary teachers will be ended.

Firstly, steps must be taken at Edgewood Campus to make the early years of teaching more appealing to their male students. This can be possibly achieved by offering incentives for males choosing to specialise in the early years of teaching, for example they should be more funding opportunities in the form of bursaries and so forth for students wanting to specialise in the early years of teaching. Secondly Edgewood Campus needs to implement a marketing strategy that makes the early years of teaching attractive to potential students. This marketing strategy must be directed especially towards its first year male students during the campus' orientation week for first year students. The campus could invite successful male teachers currently teaching in the early years to speak to students about their experiences as males teaching in the early years. This would make students aware that this is an area of teaching that can be successfully done by a male teacher and would serve to break down the stereotype that only female teachers can succeed in the early years of teaching.

This marketing strategy must not only be limited to attracting first year students already enrolled at the University, it must also work together with schools in order to encourage more male learners to consider pursuing a BEd degree specialising in teaching the early years of schooling. This can be achieved by holding a career day at Edgewood Campus aimed at promoting the early years of teaching to grade 12 male learners. I suggest opening this career day to only grade 12 learners because they are at their final year of their schooling career and it is at this period of time that they would be looking into prospective career opportunities and applying to higher education institutions. This process must entail making learners aware of the need for males in the early years of teaching as a necessary step towards creating gender equality in the teaching profession. An awareness programme held during this career day must also consist of educating learners on how constructions of masculinities often deter males from entering the early years of teaching and how this often results in an imbalance of male and female teachers in the early

years of teaching which becomes an issue of gender inequality in the workplace. This awareness programme must also advise them on how their gender as males places them in an optimum position to break down existing stereotypes and how becoming a male teacher in the early years can serve as a crucial step towards attaining gender equality in the workplace by sending out an important message that males can also teach in the early years and this area of teaching is not a career that can exclusively be done by females.

Weaver-Hightower (2011) maintains that open discussion needs to exist in classes and between male teachers themselves and these discussions must focus on the limitations created by masculine resistance to certain teaching tasks. He argues that the implementation of such open discussions can begin to end the necessity to perform hegemonic masculinities by creating awareness that such performances have great consequences and hence possibly no one would then take the trouble to perform them (Weaver-Hightower, 2011). He further argues that if parents, students, other teachers and administrators no longer need and regulate performances of masculine denial, this would instead serve to promote more 'authentic' identities from male teachers (Weaver-Hightower, 2011). This marketing strategy must therefore also openly deal with the difficulties in attracting males in the early years of teaching and explicitly discuss and evaluate commonly held ideas of masculinities and barriers which deter males from entering this area of teaching. This awareness would not only serve to educate all students on how ideas of masculinities and other barriers serve to deter males from entering this area of teaching but to also educate them on how this in turn produces gender inequalities in the workplace. It is hoped that by implementing such a strategy, it will work towards changing students' mindsets and it will encourage more male students to specialise in the early years of teaching. Cushman (2010) also maintains that even though policies may require that schools promote gender equity, this is not likely to occur unless teachers are geared up to make use of good research-based knowledge that facilitates critical reflection on their individual gender-related attitudes and their prospective effects. I therefore suggest that all students at Edgewood Campus should be compelled to complete a compulsory module based on gender issues. This module should explore ways of breaking down of gender stereotypes, eradicating gender inequalities and so forth. This would equip the students with the knowledge required to deal with gender issues as educators at school, and it would also work towards ensuring that they do not go in to a school situation and reinforce

gender stereotypes. Carrington (2002, p.301) also argues that “male students need to feel confident that they will receive effective institutional support if they meet gender-based discrimination during their initial training, especially while on school placements”. He further maintains that partnership schools need to be informed of the difficulties that might be faced by males employed in a feminized profession (Carrington, 2002). Based on Carrington’s (2002) suggestion I also suggest that Edgewood campus needs to play a role in supporting male students who may encounter gender-based discrimination as a result of a decision to pursue teaching in the early years of schooling, which is often regarded as a feminized domain. Furthermore Edgewood campus should work more closely with primary schools in order to collectively deal with possible gender discrimination faced by males who are teaching in the early years. Lastly I would like to suggest that more research be carried out regarding a reluctance of males to enter teaching in the early years as it is a promising and largely under researched area of study in the South African context.

5.4 Conclusion

This study has made a contribution towards understanding the reasons why males in a South African context are not going into teaching in the early years of schooling. Having shed greater light on this issue, it is hoped that the necessary steps will be taken at Edgewood campus to ensure that more males go into teaching in the early years in order to achieve a more equitable balance of males and females in this area of teaching. Cushman (2007, p.91) has indicated that

if gender equity issues are to be addressed at all levels of education, there is a need for policies and strategies designed to encourage and enable men to immerse themselves in the classroom experience without aspiration, while simultaneously encouraging and enabling women to take on leadership roles in schools and tertiary institutions.

She argues that by trying to resolve the problem concerning a lack of male teachers by treating male and female candidates differently will only result in disadvantaging, men, women and children (Cushman, 2007). In support of their individual self-worth men need to be aware that they have secured positions in schools or in teacher education on the basis of merit, and women

on the other hand need to be assured that society, together with education policy developers, appreciate their input to the teaching profession on the same level as they value the contribution made by men (Cushman, 2007). Foster and Newman (2007) further argue that deconstructing present beliefs regarding male primary teachers and primary teaching in general as well as supporting training and practicing teachers will work towards widening the career options of impending generations of school leavers. Although the road to achieving a gender-equitable balance of males and females in the early years of teaching is not an easy one, implementing strategies to eradicate society's perception of this area of teaching as a female territory will certainly work towards doing so and in the long run serve to contribute to a more gender equitable South Africa.

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Appendix 1: Ethical clearance certificate



6 September 2012

Ms Shaaista Moosa 207505985
School of Education
Edgewood Campus

Dear Ms Moosa

Protocol reference number: HSS/0834/012

Project title: Failing to attract males in the early years of teaching: A study of male undergraduate Bachelor of Education students at University of KwaZulu-Natal (Edgewood Campus).

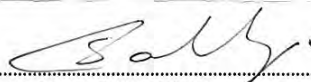
EXPEDITED APPROVAL

I wish to inform you that your application has been granted Full Approval through an expedited review process.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment/modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number. PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the school/department for a period of 5 years.






I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully


.....
Professor Steven Collings (Chair)

/px

cc Supervisor Professor Deevia Bhana
cc Academic leader Dr D Davids

Professor S Collings (Chair)
Humanities & Social Sc Research Ethics Committee
Westville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building
Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban, 4000, South Africa
Telephone: +27 (0)31 260 3587/8350 Facsimile: +27 (0)31 260 4609 Email: ximbap@ukzn.ac.za / snymanm@ukzn.ac.za
Founding Campuses:  Edgewood  Howard College  Medical School  Pietermaritzburg  Westville

INSPIRING GREATNESS



Appendix 2: Informed consent – participants (male students)

Dear Participant

I Shaaista Moosa- Student Number 207505985 am a B Ed (Masters) student at the University of KwaZulu Natal. I would like to invite you to participate in a study that I am undertaking as part of my degree. I will require for you to participate in an interview that will most probably take one hour of your time. As a participant you will be interviewed on an individual basis.

A brief description of the study follows:

Title: Failing to attract males in the early years of teaching: A study of male undergraduate Bachelor of Education students (Edgewood Campus).

Key features of the project: In this project I will seek to investigate why there are few male undergraduate students in ECD and Foundation/Intermediate Phase at Edgewood Campus. Weaver-Hightower (2011) has argued that in spite of public desires & policy movements to increase their numbers, significant barriers and challenges still exist for male teachers. “Pre-service teachers experiences, especially might illuminate challenges to the recruitment and retention of males” (Weaver-Hightower, 2011, p.97). This study therefore aims to investigate why most male undergraduate students at Edgewood Campus are reluctant to pursue teaching in the early years. Whilst working towards achieving this aim this study also intends to disclose the extent to which the constructions of masculinity impact on the lower concentration of men opting to teach young children. This study will make a contribution towards understanding the reasons why males in a South African context are not going into the early years of teaching. This is vital as it not only has effects for the feminization of teaching but also for what is happening in the classroom. The interview will be audio-taped. I will be careful to use the information that you supply in a manner that will ensure your anonymity. In order to protect your identity I will use a pseudonym in my transcripts and my research report. If you are uncomfortable at any time you are at liberty to stop the interview and withdraw from the study. Universal principles such as honesty, justice and respect will direct my research.

If you would like further details pertaining to the validity of the study then you are most welcome to contact Prof Deevia Bhana, my supervisor of the study on bhanad1@ukzn.ac.za or on 031 260 2603.

Thank you for your co-operation.

Yours faithfully

Student

Informed Consent

Declaration

I _____ (full name of participant)
hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of this research project and I consent to my participating in the research project.

I understand that I am liberty to withdraw from the project at any time should I desire.

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT

DATE

NOTE:

Potential subjects should be given time to read, understand and question the information given before giving consent. This should include time out of the presence of the investigator and time to consult friends and/or family.

Appendix 3: Semi-structured interview schedule (individual interview)

1. What do you think about teaching in the Foundation Phase?
2. Was there a strong presence of Foundation Phase male teachers in the primary school you attended?
3. If not why do you think there had been so few male teachers in the Foundation Phase?
4. Did this play a role in determining your decision to not pursue teaching in the Foundation Phase?
5. Why didn't you choose to specialise in the Foundation Phase?
6. Studies at this campus have shown that very few males specialise in the Foundation Phase, why do you think these males are reluctant to pursue teaching in the Foundation Phase?
7. In your culture or community would you say it is acceptable for a male to teach in the Foundation Phase or work with young children?
8. Do you think gender plays a role in determining who will make a successful Foundation Phase teacher? Why?
9. How would your friends and family have reacted had you gone into the early years of teaching?
10. Do you think there is a need for more males in the early years of teaching? Why?
11. Do you think Foundation Phase teaching is an occupation equally suitable for both males and females? Why?
12. Do you think that males who choose to teach in the early years end up getting a negative reaction from society? Why?
13. If teaching in the early years was not regarded as a feminized domain, would you have been more inclined to consider it as a career? Why?
14. What do you think of males who choose to specialise in the Foundation Phase?
15. Research has shown that some men who teach in the Foundation Phase are seen as being gay or feminine. What are your views on this? Do you agree or disagree?
16. What do you think can be done to attract more males in the Foundation Phase at Edgewood campus?

17. Research has shown that teaching in the early years is seen as a 'low' status profession as compared to teaching in the higher years therefore men are reluctant to teach in the early years. What are your views on this? So you agree or disagree?
18. Research has shown that men who go into the early years of teaching are often suspected of having an unnatural sexual interest in children and are suspected of wanting to abuse children. What are your views on this? Do you agree or disagree?

Appendix 4: Turnitin originality report

Turnitin Originality Report

Failing to attract males in the early years of teaching: A study of male undergraduate Bachelor of Education students at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (Edgewood Campus). by Shaaista Moosa

From 16 Turning 17: Youth, Gender and Sexuality (Gender Education Master Students Year 2)

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